FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY AND
EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SOCIETY:

CENTRE FOR THE HISTORY OF INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS

A Story of the Coming of Age of Education in St. Maarten (1954 – 2000)

Milton GEORGE

Dissertation offered to obtain the degree
of Doctor of Educational Sciences (PhD)

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Marc Depaepe

Co-supervisor: Dr. Maria Van Enckevort

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Cover picture:

Coat of Arms of St. Maarten

Semper progrediens: Always Progressing

SUMMARY

***Semper Progrediens*: A story of the coming of age of education in St. Maarten (1954 – 2000)**
Doctoral thesis submitted to obtain the degree of Doctor in Educational Sciences, May 2013
Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Marc Depaepe. Co-supervisor: Dr. Maria Van Enckevort

This research has two main objectives. First, it maps out the development of national primary education in St. Maarten between 1954 and 2000. Second, it seeks to tap into the experience of the protagonists of said development, giving them a voice in the recording of their own history.

This research is based on both written and oral history. Therefore, the information used to meet the research objectives was gathered through the collection of primary written sources; the study of secondary written materials; and also interviews and meetings with relevant educational agents, who represent the staff of school administration, school management, teaching personnel, former pupils and parents. In order to gather this material, we conducted field research in St. Maarten between September 2005 and December 2006.

The research carried out was to describe the overall framework of education in St. Maarten. This included school management, teachers as well as students within the juridical space of the Kingdom of the Netherlands at large. In this framework, the Kingdom's Statute and the federal *Regulations* of the Dutch Antilles established a system within which competencies and tasks were assigned and responsibilities were demarcated. We further documented how the rules, regulations and resources were applied at the island level. We documented the start and/or development of schools within educational networks. By means of interviews, meetings and responses to a questionnaire, we tapped into the experience of the individual protagonists of mostly primary education on the Island between 1954 and 2000. Through these efforts, we were able to lend a voice to postcolonial subjects, who have often been by-passed or forgotten by most traditional historians and, in a sense, rendered voiceless.

In Part One, we speak about the Dutch Antilles in general and St. Maarten in particular. We discussed the effects of slavery and its consequences. Both before and after the restructuration of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1954, education was essentially shaped by the different religious denominations on the Island. Over time, St. Maarten's schooling system developed from an almost non-existing entity to a well-structured one. Moreover, the structure which it adopted closely resembled the education framework in the Netherlands, its former colonial ruler. It did this despite St. Maarten's geographical situation (i.e. in the Caribbean) and the fact that its main language was/is not Dutch but English. Even so, our study has shown that the Netherlands did not significantly determine the content of the curriculum. In fact, another Caribbean island, Curaçao, has affected St. Maarten's education far more than the Netherlands or 'the Kingdom'. As a result, St. Maarten presents a mixed educational landscape. Our sources indicate that the Statute of 1954 and the dismantling of the Antilles in 2010 were turning points for St. Maarten, but not necessarily critical moments.

Part Two reflects the respondents' reactions to several issues concerning education in St. Maarten. Although the Statute allowed for modifications, the Dutch educational system was embedded in St. Maarten through Curaçao. Although both students and teachers longed for St. Maarten-related curricular contents, the input of Curaçao was dominant. It was only after local St. Maarten students became teachers that topics about St. Maarten found their place in the curriculum. Even though it took some time to integrate St. Maarten in the curriculum, based on our interviews and questionnaires, we discovered that the people of St. Maarten did not (and still do not) have the feeling that education has let them down. It is probably only now that people are beginning to question whether and to which extent schools are able to positively influence young people. In the past, they believed that schooling —however foreign its curriculum may have been at the time— did actually help them to find a niche in the world. The Coat of Arms of St. Maarten summarizes our findings about the development of education in the Dutch island half: *Semper progrediens* – "Always progressing". Education in St. Maarten has always progressed without showing radical breaks from the past.

SAMENVATTING

***Semper Progrediens*: A story of the coming of age of education in St. Maarten (1954 – 2000)**
Proefschrift aangeboden tot het verkrijgen van de graad van Doctor in de Pedagogische Wetenschappen, mei 2013
Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Marc Depaepe. Co-supervisor: Dr. Maria Van Enckevort

Dit onderzoek heeft twee doelen. Ten eerste brengt het de ontwikkeling van de onderwijs op Sint-Maarten tussen 1954 en 2000 in kaart. Ten tweede wil het de ervaring van de betrokkenen van deze ontwikkeling benutten om hen, door het optekenen van hun eigen geschiedenis, een stem te geven.
Dit onderzoek is gebaseerd op zowel geschreven als mondelinge geschiedenis. De informatie, die gebruikt werd om de onderzoeksdoelen te bereiken, werd verzameld aan de hand van primaire geschreven bronnen, het bestuderen van secundaire geschreven bronnen, alsook interviews en ontmoetingen met relevante onderwijsvertegenwoordigers, zoals het personeel, de administratie, management van de school, leerkrachten, ex leerlingen en ouders. Om dit materiaal te verzamelen hebben wij veldonderzoek gedaan op Sint-Maarten van september 2005 tot december 2006.

In het veldonderzoek hebben wij het algemene onderwijskader op Sint-Maarten onderzocht. Dit omvatte het management van de school, leerkrachten en leerlingen binnen het juridische kader van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden. Verder hebben wij gedocumenteerd hoe de regels, reglementen en middelen toegepast werden op het niveau van het eiland. Ten slotte hebben we door interviews, ontmoetingen en antwoorden op een bevraging de ervaring van de individuele hoofdrolspelers van het lager onderwijs op het eiland tussen 1954 en 2000 benut. Door deze inspanningen waren we in staat om een plaats te geven aan de door meer traditionele historici vaak overgeslagen of vergeten postkoloniale onderwerpen.

In deel één van deze disstertatie spreken we over de Nederlandse Antillen in het algemeen en over Sint-Maarten in het bijzonder. We hebben de effecten van de slavernij en haar gevolgen nadien bediscussieerd. Zowel voor als na de herstructurering van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in 1954 was het onderwijs wezenlijk gevormd door de verschillende religieuze congregaties op het eiland. De structuur die het aannam leek sterk op het onderwijskader in Nederland, zijn vroegere koloniale heerser. Dit gebeurde ongeacht de geografische situatie van Sint-Maarten (nl. de Caraïben) en het feit dat de voornaamste taal niet het Nederlands maar het Engels is. En toch heeft onze studie uitgewezen dat Nederland de inhoud van het curriculum niet significant bepaald heeft. In werkelijkheid heeft Curaçao, een ander Caraïbisch eiland, het onderwijs op Sint-Maarten veel meer beïnvloed dan Nederland of het Koninkrijk. Zodoende heeft Sint-Maarten een gemengd onderwijslandschap. Onze bronnen geven aan dat het Statuut van 1954 en de ontmanteling van de Antillen in 2010 keerpunten, maar niet noodzakelijk kritieke momenten, zijn geweest voor Sint-Maarten.

Deel Twee geeft de reacties van de respondenten over verschillende onderwijszaken op Sint-Maarten weer. Hoewel het Statuut wijzigingen toestond, was het Nederlandse onderwijssysteem ingebed op Sint-Maarten via Curaçao. Hoewel zowel leerlingen als leerkrachten verlangden naar curriculaire inhouden gerelateerd aan Sint-Maarten, was de inbreng van Curaçao dominant. Pas nadat leerlingen van Sint-Maarten zelf leerkracht werden, kregen thema's over Sint-Maarten een plaats in het curriculum. Het integreren van thema's over Sint-Maarten duurde dan wel even, maar we hebben ontdekt, gebaseerd op onze interviews en bevragingen, dat de mensen op Sint-Maarten niet het gevoel hadden (en nog steeds niet hebben) dat het onderwijs hen in de steek heeft gelaten. Het wapen van Sint-Maarten vat onze bevindingen over de ontwikkeling van het onderwijs op het Nederlandse deel van het eiland samen: *Semper progrediens* – "Immer vooruitgaand". Het onderwijs op Sint-Maarten is altijd vooruit gegaan, zonder radicale breuken met het verleden.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Every achievement in life is worth mentioning, especially when finished with success; in which case, it is worth celebrating and sharing with others. Since the "I" cannot do everything alone, it needs "thou" to reach the final goal. It is, therefore, with great pleasure that I want to express my gratitude to all those who believed in me and pushed me to always take the next step.

I would like to mention my supervisor Prof. Dr. Marc Depaepe. I am very thankful that he never gave up on me and kept believing that I would make it. In his authentic way of dealing with students, he also reminded me every time anew that he expected yet another part of my research. I am also very grateful to my co-supervisor Dr. Maria Van Enckevort, a St. Maartener by choice. She was the best person to point me in the right direction, especially when it came down to the field research in St. Maarten. Her insightful advice and magnificent network on the Island were of invaluable help.

I shall always be thankful to each and every person in St. Maarten who opened his or her home, heart and mind to me not only during my research, but also during all those years when I called the Island *home*. This research project was a way of saying THANK YOU to the 'Friendly Island' for all that it meant and still means in my life.

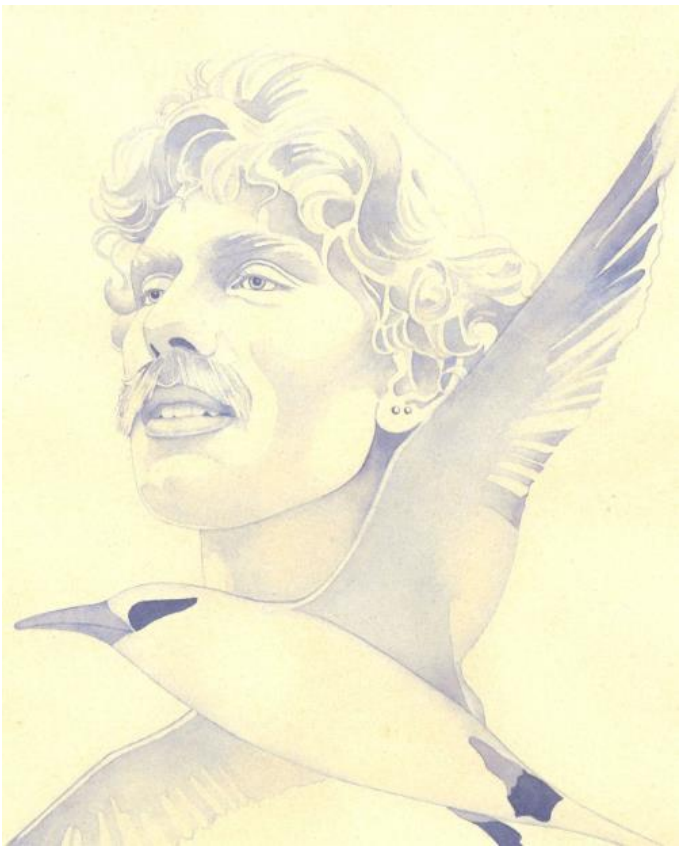
Allow me also to thank the academic jury for their constructive remarks and suggestions, as well the faculty and its staff members, especially Claudia De Broyer and Maria Leon, for their assistance over the past years.

This research and period of my life would not have been joyful without the help, support, and patience of some friends. First, I must thank Dr. Sergio Scatolini, my Latin American *hermano* and *amigo*. He has always been there, whether in the next room, the next country, or on Skype, Yahoo and Whatsapp. We have not only talked about almost everything in this dissertation, but also argued and laughed on many occasions. *Gracias por todo, amigo*. Second, I also owe my gratitude to my friend Dr. Melanie Van Oort-Hall. She has been the linguistic and spiritual guru at all times. Her way of giving feedback was often challenging (to both of us). *Ich bin Ihnen sehr dankbar*.

A big *thank you*, *masha danki,* and *gran tangi* go out to all my other friends and 'soul mates' in different colors, shapes, sizes and communities. You know that you have contributed to this achievement of mine in your unique ways. I would like to mention especially my very proud, loved and respected brother and godmother.

There are so many more people whose support I would like to acknowledge! You, you, and you…, you all know that you are in my hearth and that we have been given the grace of sharing each other's life journey.

DEDICATION



To:

Cees van Dolderen

A Friesian St. Maartener by option who was an exemplary and courageous person in so many ways.

2 September 1953 – 8 March 2010

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research has two main objectives. First, we will charter the development of primary education in St. Maarten between 1954 and 2000. At this moment, there is hardly a complete documented source of information about the history of education of St. Maarten. Most material being produced strongly relies on the works of history writers like Hartog and Voges[7], which are of a general nature and do not deal with contemporary developments. Neither did they necessarily concentrate on understanding post-colonial historical developments or recording oral history. Second, we will tap into the experience of the protagonists of mentioned national and Catholic primary education between 1954 and 2000, by listening to their story.

Furthermore, given the importance and role of schooling in the socialization and nation building processes, we also indirectly aim to contribute to that process in St. Maarten (a place which I called home for many years).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To reach our goal, we looked for answers to the following questions:

How was education established on the island? Who brought it there? Who designed it? Who administered it? What models were followed and what educational currents influenced its development? What was the role of schooling in the making of St. Maarten?

What was the Dutch colonial policy in education? What were the key factors that shaped the development of primary education in St. Maarten between 1954-2000? Who

[7] Hartog, J. (1964). *De Bovenwindse Eilanden.* Aruba: De Wit N.V.; Hartog, J. (1981). *History of Sint Maarten and Saint Martin.* Sint Maarten: The Sint Maarten Jaycees. Voges, M. (1990). *De zusters Dominicanessen van Voorschoten: 100 jaar op St. Maarten, Nederlandse Antillen, 1890- 1990.* S.l.: De Couraçaosche Courant N.V. and Voges, M. (1992). *Sint Maarten, Saint Martin.* St. Maarten: Van Dorp St. Maarten N.V.

were the main actors that steered the course of these developments? What were their motives?

How did the people involved in primary education perceive the process? Who benefited from the development that took place and who did not? What is the general perception about the legacy of the options made in primary education during 1954—2000?

RESEARCH MOTIVATION

The preparatory research for this dissertation was conducted at a time when the statutory entity of the Netherlands Antilles, of which St. Maarten was a part, was being dismantled.

Constitutional change called for a redefinition and reconstruction of the community's identity, which some understand as *nationhood*. Since schools are the primordial networks where the community seeks to articulate its story while its young generations are socialized, questions will always arise about education, its goals, and its role in nation building (George, 2006). It is in this light that this dissertation intends to fill the gap in the centralized information about education in St. Maarten between 1954—2000 and to contribute to the on-going discussion about education on the half of the island which has been influenced by the Netherlands by documenting and reconstructing part of the island's educational history. The periodization we use begins with the signing of the 'Statute' in 1954.

APPROACH TO THE RESEARCH

We conducted our field research in St. Maarten between September 2005 and December 2006. During this period, we worked for one year in a bureau of the Department of Education with a view to gaining an insight into the field of education as well as to collecting data from libraries, archives, interviews, meetings, etc.. The detailed information is described in the part of the written sources.

Methodology

This research is based on both written and oral sources. Therefore, the information used to meet the research objectives was gathered through the collection of primary written

sources and the study of secondary written sources over the period 1954-2000. Finally we had interviews and meetings with relevant educational agents representing the administration, school management, teaching personnel, former students, and parents.

Construction of the Research

In this dissertation, we concentrated on the following three levels:

We described the overall framework of the education in St. Maarten. Management, teachers, and students inhabit the juridical space of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and not just the space of their school. The Kingdom's Statute and the federal Dutch Antillean *Regulations* established a system within which competencies and tasks are assigned, and responsibilities demarcated.

We documented how the rules, regulations and resources were applied at the island level by documenting the start and/or development of schools within educational networks.

Thirdly we worked by means of interviews, meetings and a questionnaire. In this step, we tap into the experience of the individual protagonists of primary education on the island between 1954 and 2000, thus, voicing the postcolonial subjects that were bypassed by historians and rendered voiceless.

Written sources

We utilized newspapers, books and other documents from the archives of the *Fraters of Tilburg, Zusters Dominicanessen of Voorschoten, KITLV (Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal, Land en Volkenkunde)*, Museum of St. Maarten, the St. Maarten Statistic Bureau, the Philipsburg Jubilee Library as well as the collection of documents of private individuals and what were then the Federal and Island Governments. Some material available on Internet will be used to compare with our findings.

Questionnaire and interviews

For our research, we placed an electronic questionnaire**,** which could be accessed at: http://www.ngoaingutinhoc.com/milton/. The questions were reproduced in part two of this research. The link to the website was sent to different institutions (universities, *Antillenhuis*, Government departments, etc.), who then forwarded it to St. Maarteners and

other people who had lived in St. Maarten, inviting them to fill in the questionnaire. The same questionnaire was printed out and given to a great number of people eligible to fill in each part (former student, teacher, management, or government personnel). They were also requested to forward it to others. During our stay in St. Maarten, several people responded to the questionnaire in person[8].

In total, we were able to gather the responses of 14 former teachers, 63 students, 6 members of the school management, 10 government staff members through the above-mentioned website, as well as the answers of 23 former teachers, 134 students, 18 members of the school management, 27 government staff members through a printed version of the online questions.

For our interviews, we drew up a list of interviewees in collaboration with Maria van Enckevort, who was the Dean of the University of St. Martin and co-supervisor of this research. This list of interviewees included (former) teachers from different elementary schools (Protestant, Public, Catholic), former students and management personnel from before and after 1954, religious sisters who had worked in education in St. Maarten, government personnel, inspectors of education, different institutions of education. Some of the former students became teachers and then principals, inspectors, and/or board members of schools.[9] For the interviews, we used the questions in the questionnaire as a starting and guiding point. The interviews lasted between 30- 60 minutes.

Literature, documents and other sources

The documents consulted were from the Educational Summit 2002; *Staatsblad onderwijs, Onderwijsverordening;* timetable, picture of school, classroom and copy books (MAC); Topographic map of St. Maarten; books on education of St. Maarten (thesis and research material in the library); pictures from classrooms and school, documentation of establishment and development of the school as well as names from old students of the Hillside Christian School; archives: documents up to 1925. Documents after this date were not yet decontaminated. Photos were taken with a digital camera from the documents

8 For the questions and responses of the questionnaire see appendix 2.

9 Appendix 1: List of interviewees.

needed. Some CD-roms with scanned document (done by the acting Lt. Governor Mr. Mathias Voges) were copied for us. Names from ex-students for interview, photographs, and newspaper clippings by Jane Buncamper. Besluiten: 1954, nr. 43 Tekst van de Onderwijsverordening 1935, and 935, nr. 49) Onderwijsbesluit 1935; copies of school books from the last 50 years.

From almost all primary schools, we obtained: pictures of the schools, the codes of conduct, mission statements, history of the schools. The documents, pictures, school books and other relevant information gathered from the different libraries[10], museum and archives are together with the transcribed interviews.

Limitations of this Research

The complexity of St. Maarten's political status bears on the research. After all, it is a half-island territory, member of a four-island autonomous federal country, part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, neither in the European Union nor in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). For the optimist, it is both Caribbean and Dutch. For the pessimist, it is neither here nor there. These complexities impact the position that the islanders take vis-à-vis education, especially concerning the language of instruction (English or Dutch, or both?).

The information gathering process was made difficult by the lack of a thorough, centralized archive. This dearth is due partly to human negligence and indifference (e.g. because of the Dutch's lack of interest in the Netherlands Antilles) and also partly to the chaos and destruction that hurricanes have visited upon the island. In 1995, hurricane Louis annihilated much of the documents we needed. In some cases, there still are archives but, due to a scarcity of resources, most of the documents to which people refer have not yet been decontaminated yet and are kept in "some place" which no one can really pinpoint.

The relevant information about St. Maarten's education is limited and scattered. It must be sought in Curaçao, the Netherlands and St. Maarten itself. Living in Belgium has not helped in this sense.

10 The main libraries from which we could obtain material and information were: KITLV in Leiden and the Philipsburg Jubilee Library.

Another limitation encountered during interviews is that respondents are not always willing to say certain things on record. St. Maarten is a small community and people do not always wish to speak openly about others. At times, this means that we know about things which are of importance to our research because we heard them during our recorded conversations; however, because they were uttered off record we are not at liberty to use them. Even though these pieces of information will still influence our interpretation, we are unable to use them as primary oral sources.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

HISTORY WRITING AND ORAL HISTORY

Introduction

This chapter investigates some basic ideas that have been formulated in the historical study of education and is in line with the research done at the *Centre for the History of Intercultural Relations* (CHIR) at KU Leuven Kulak. It is therefore appropriate to elaborate on some of these ideas (with which we have already dealt in an article presented at an educational conference on St. Maarten).[11]

Given that this is a project concerning the writing of history, we must start by dealing with some more basic questions about the nature of our enterprise, more specifically, with the concept of history and history writing as such.

History

History can refer to different things for different people. In pre-modern academic circles, the concept of history mostly referred to the view that history was the discipline that recorded the facts, which had taken place over the course of time and within a given space. People were often unaware that the record of past events often came with interpretations about the presumed intentional links between them, for example, in terms of causal relationships and/or correlations.

However, although history was seen as a collection of annals and chronicles, post-colonial and post-modern thinkers highlighted the subjective dimension of any and all narrative about the past. For people like Arthur Warwick, history is not only described or recorded, but also invented.

11 This conference, entitled "Re-Thinking Education in the Caribbean: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow. A local imperative in a global context", was an initiative by Milton George in collaboration with the University of St. Martin. His promoter and co-promoter were also presenters at this conference. The conference proceedings resulted in the publication of "St. Martin Studies 2006".

History is about finding things out, and solving problems, rather than about spinning narratives or telling stories. History is a human activity carried out by an organized corps of fallible human beings, acting, however, in accordance with strict methods and principles, empowered to make choices in the language they use (as between the precise and the imprecise, for example), that 'corps of fallible human beings' being known as historians.[12]

This detective-like enterprise is capable of producing knowledge thanks to its systematic evidence-gathering method:

> (…) history is the bodies of knowledge about the past produced by historians applying the rigorous methods of professional history, and deploying secondary sources in the analysis and interpretation of primary sources.[13]

This means that for Warwick,

> (…) there is a vital distinction between 'history' and 'the past'. For him, it is certainly unacceptable to use the word 'history' to signify some *a priori*, unsubstantiated conception along the lines of 'the material process by which the past itself becomes the present and, indeed, the future, unfolding in a series of stages (or epochs or periods), according to some pattern or meaning, involving conflicts or accommodations in the exercise of power'.[14]

Thus, he continues:

> Historians do not 'construct' or 'reconstruct' the past. It is knowledge (open to discussion and debate as all knowledge is) about the past that historians produce.[15]

The birth of history is often a collective enterprise, whereby a group produces a given knowledge of things that happened in the past.

For some, these bodies of knowledge are constructs of the mind: history is imagined. According to Porter:

> Most definitions of history begin with some term like inquire, ode of thought, or knowledge, which asserts the primacy of something pre-linguistic, apart from language

12 Marwick, A. (2001). *The New Nature of History: Knowledge, Evidence, Language*, Hampshire: Palgrave, p. 28.

13 Idem p. 28

14 Idem p. 29.

15 Idem p. 29.

> entirely. The fact that the only history we know anything about is an artifact of words is ignored, sunk beneath serious discussion as though that fact were too obvious and insignificant to deserve attention.[16]

The fact that knowledge of history is imagined does not render it superfluous. The opposite is true.

> History is a necessity. Individuals, communities, societies could scarcely exist if all knowledge of the past was wiped out. As memory is to the individual, so history is to the community or society.[17]

We, therefore, agree with Arthur Marwick:

> Without history, we shall not begin to understand the problems of the present and will be without the basic knowledge essential for grappling intelligently with the future.[18]

This elucidating dimension of history portrait that there is no present without the past. It is on the knowledge of what happened in the past that the present is based and so the future will be on the experiences of the present situation. Events happened in the past became a part of history but they are presented, translated and constructed in various ways. Therefore, people can contextualize, look at history from different perspectives, background knowledge, philosophical understanding, and give them different meaning. A particular event has different meaning in different context; the overview that people look at the historical values, norms differs from generation to generation, from time to time and from society to society.

In other words, history also involves presenting the past for the future as part of history by means of stories. History is the way people remember and reconstruct past events and their interconnections.

Philosophically speaking, events that make up human life have meaning because they are understood and explained as being part of unfolding stories. However, since the past is passed, in and of itself, it is silent. It is human beings who knit together the traces of

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16 Porter, N. (1998). Making Up Lost Time: Writing on the Writing of History, in Fay, B., Pomper, P. & Vann, R. (eds.) in *History and Theory: Contemporary Readings.* Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., pp. 69-89, p. 74.

17 Marwick, A. (2001), p. 31.

18 Marwick, A. (2001), p. 37.

the past into a tapestry of stories, placing individual events within general frameworks and suggesting causes, effects and correlations. In contrast with Warwick, history writing always remains storytelling. Or, as Michel De Certeau put it,

> (…) history is not an epistemological criticism. It remains always a narrative. History tells of its own work and, simultaneously, of the work which can be read in a past time.[20]

History is, therefore, always written or told from the present perspective of the writer(s) or teller(s). Indeed, as Depaepe observed:

> We are indeed condemned to write and to continue to rewrite history from the present. This, of course, does not imply legitimating systematically distorting it in function of an ideologically fixed position. It does mean that we have the task of constantly searching for the underlying motives and the socio-historical definition of our work.[21]

Consequently, history is something that we do. We tell stories and write histories, those stories and histories tell us who we are. This identity we have is also part of our history. Premdas in his article on Caribbean identity states that:

> Often this identity is formed in contradistinction to the claims of other groups to a similar sense of uniqueness, so that in a real sense identity formation is a relational and comparative phenomenon locked into 'we-they' antipathies which may be mildly benign or overtly hostile.[22]

Furthermore, Upton gives an example on history and national identity:

> There cannot be a nation without a national history. History tells the nations what kind of people they are, what sort of policies they must pursue if the nation is to survive, and it delivers graphic warnings about nations which fail to read the lessons of history

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20 Certeau, M. (1988). *The writing of History*. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 43.

21 Depaepe, M. (1993). History of education anno 1992: 'A tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing'? in *History of Education: Journal of the History of Education Society*, 1464-5130, 22 (1), pp. 1 – 10.

22 Premdas, R. (1996). Ethnicity and Identity in the Caribbean: Decentering a Myth in Working paper nr. 234, p. 10. See also Premdas, R. (ed.) (1999). *Identity, Ethnicity and Culture in the Caribbean*. Trinidad: The Multimedia Production Centre.

> aright, which lose sight of their national destiny and perish as a consequence. For a nation, the knowledge of its history is held to be a matter of life and death.[23]

However, each description of 'what history is or is supposed to be' depends on the historian behind the story. White explains this further:

> It is difficult to get an objective history of a scholarly discipline, because if the historian is himself a practitioner of it, he is likely to be a devotee of one or another of its sects and hence biased; and if he is not a practitioner, he is unlikely to have the expertise necessary to distinguish between the significant and the insignificant events of the field's development".[24]

The hermeneutical process of self-understanding comes full circle. Whichever way history is understood, it has to do with past events and the purpose for which these events are used and explained. According to Noël Caroll:

> A historical narrative is not a *transparent* representation or copy of a sequence of past events. Narration irreducibly entails selecting the events to be included in its exposition as well as filling in links that are not available in the evidential record. The historian does not find or discover her narrative; she constructs it.[25]

Different peoples tell and retell their past in a myriad of ways. Communities, who have privileged the spoken word, have used oral narrations as the channel of their historical consciousness. Others, who give priority to the written word, have favored written documents and sources.

It is of paramount importance to bear in mind that the writers of history as well as story tellers select whatever and whomever they consider worth remembering. When attempting to write the history of education of this or that country, one always runs the risk of giving a false impression that historians always have access to how all things actually were; they do not. Consequently,

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23 Upton, A. (1999). History and national identity: some Finnish examples in National History and Identity, in *Studia Fennica Ethnologica,* (6), pps. 153-165, p. 153.

24 White, H. (1998). The Historical Text as Literary Artifact in Fay, B., Pomper, P. & Vann, R. (eds.). *History and Theory: Contemporary Readings,* Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., pp. 15-33, p. 15.

25 Carroll, N. (1998). Interpretation, History, and Narrative in Fay, B., Pomper, P. & Vann, R. (eds.). History and Theory: Contemporary Readings, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., pp.34-56, p. 35.

> (the) historical discourse does not follow the real; but rather, it only signifies it, endlessly reiterating that it *happened*, but without having this assertion be anything other than the obvious underside of all historical narrative.[26]

As such, **history cannot escape being perspectival**. Nancy F. Partner also maintains this position as she argues that:

> All accounts tell things and what is told is contained in the telling. Further, all accounts of things are of "things past." In an important and primary, not secondary, sense, history is contained in the category of all made "accounts of," all stories, and cannot exempt itself because of claims made about the actuality of things outside the text. Those claims simply make history a special class of accounts. The central conventions which govern all narrative – the organization of time, the distinction between contingent and significant sequence, alias story – unite history and fiction profoundly and permanently.[27]

This means that there is not merely one story to be told or history to be written, but many. Hayden White insists that:

> In order to write the history of any given scholarly discipline or even of a science, one must be prepared to ask questions *about* it of a sort that do not have to be asked in the practice *of* it.[28]

Moreover,

> Histories gain part of their explanatory effect by their success in making stories out of *mere* chronicles; and stories in turn are made out of chronicles by an operation called "emplotment".[29]

Thus, since whatever we write or tell depends on our vantage point, it is necessary that history writers provide others with the appropriate tools to enable them to assess and critique the writer's story. There is a need for a transparent methodology.

Furthermore, history and historiography are not identical. While the former is about telling a story about the past or letting the past tell some of its stories, the latter has to do with the history of writing history. In other words,

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26 Certeau, M. (1988) p. 42.

27 Partner, N. (1998). Making Up Lost Time: Writing on the Writing of History in Fay, B., Pomper, P. & Vann, R. (eds.), *History and Theory: Contemporary Readings.* Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., pp. 69-89, p. 74.

28 White, H. (1998), p. 15.

29 White, H. (1998), p. 17.

> (…) Intellectuals who use the word 'history' to signify 'the past' then have to introduce the word 'historiography' to signify the writings of historians. But if one makes the firm distinction, then that word is not needed, since what historians write *is* history.[30]

Thus, historiography separates its present time from the past, but everywhere it repeats the initial act of division.[31] Historiography is often used to cover the history of historical knowledge and interpretation surrounding non-written accounts of the past and the broader issues of methodology. There is a firm line between literature and history in its essence. Herbert Butterfield says:

> What concerns us, therefore, is not just 'the History of Historiography,' the mere story of the development of a branch of literature, but the unfolding of a whole great aspect of human experience. We need to know how man came to acquire a concept of 'the past.' This concept of the past, man's consciousness of history, a feeling for history and a sense of the past.[32]

Researchers usually focus on the written products of historical thinking, but with constant reference to the larger sphere of social memory and the way in which knowledge of the past has changed over time, there is a growing awareness that "written history" is not the final word, so to speak. The social recognition and status of historians changes in subject matter and source materials. Michel De Certeau, therefore, states that:

> The situation of the historiographer makes study of the real appear in two quite different positions within the scientific process: the real insofar as it is the *known* (what the historian studies, understands, or "bring to life" from a past society), and the real insofar as it is entangled within the scientific operations (the present society, to which the historians' problematic, their procedures, modes of comprehension, and finally a practice of meaning are referable).[33]

This also holds true for the philosophies and assumptions of historians, and the ever-changing relationship between historical interpretation and contemporary social and political contexts.[34] Thus:

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30 Marwick, A. (2001), p. 29.

31 Certeau, M. (1988), p. 3.

32 Butterfield, H. (1981). *The Origins of History*, New York: Basic Books, p. 14-15.

33 Certeau, M. (1988), p. 35.

34 Higman, B. (1999). *General History of the Caribbean, Vol. VI: Methodology and Historiography of the Caribbean*. London: Unesco Publishing/Macmillan Education Ltd., p. 1.

> The word 'historiography', accordingly, can be reserved for the specialist study of the writings of historians (*not* the content of these writings) that is to say, the history of history.[35]

Methodology must, therefore, respond to the technical concerns of historians and the theoretical frameworks which they employ to interpret and communicate their findings. The technical concerns relate to the means by which historians identify and access historical evidence; the means they use to interrogate these data and the tools applied to analyze them.[36] Consequently, we must acknowledge, as Marwick put it, that:

> 'History' embraces: the writings of historians; the research activities which lie behind these writings; the teaching and learning of both methods, on the one side, and ideas and information, on the other; the communication of historical knowledge by various means; all the activities associated with the learning outcomes inherent in the discipline of history.[37]

Thus, "history is the 'privilege'" that must be remembered so that one shall not oneself be forgotten. In its own midst it places the people, who stretch from a past to a future".[38] Hence, "one type of history ponders what is comprehensible and what are the conditions of understanding; the other claims to reencounter lived experience, exhumed by virtue of a knowledge of the past".[39]

The growing awareness of the narrative dimension of history —understood both as a collective and subjective endeavor— has been enhanced by post-colonial history writing, which, therefore, deserves its own treatment.

POSTCOLONIAL HISTORICAL WRITING

According to Dipesh Chakrabarty,

35 Marwick, A. (2001), p. 29.

36 Higman, B. (1999), p. 1.

37 Marwick, A. (2001), p. 31.

38 Certeau, M. (1988), p. 4.

39 Idem. P. 35.

> (…) the academic discourse of history – that is, the 'history' produced in universities – is concerned with 'Europe' and Eurocentricity remains the sovereign, theoretical subject of all histories, the point of reference from which East and West are divided. 'Indian,' 'Chinese,' 'Kenyan,' and other histories are continually being related to European history and history-writing.[40]

The Euro-centric thrust of history writing in the previous centuries, which is attacked by authors like Chakrabarty, is very present in post-colonial thought. Nevertheless, there are also writers who warn against taking the prefix 'post' as a reflection of reality. Jeannie Suk underlines that the postcolonial era does not necessarily represent a break with the past.

The term's disavowal by some and its justification by others work to establish continuity in the face of the term's implied discontinuity. In the debate over whether postcolonial describes the present or a state not yet achieved, includes or excludes the past, the interplay between past, present, and future points us to a paradox. The anticolonial process of getting beyond colonialism that is crucial to some definitions of postcoloniality implies a progress: the resistance to colonialism as moving beyond it.[41]

It would, therefore, be misleading to think that the colonial structures have been abolished. This would ignore the continuing world-wide neo-colonial inequality. Seen from this angle,

> (…) there may in fact be nothing 'post' about postcolonial.[42]

People from former colonies often complain that the persistence of a colonial substratum in the world economic and political order is also reflected in history writing. For example, whenever European and North American scholars impose their academic criteria on others, this would constitute a form of academic neo-colonialism. This western normativity has been described as part of the heritage of the 'modern' educational project[44] ('which was far from emancipatory'[45]).

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40 Chakrabarty, D. (2000). *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference.* New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p. 27.

41 Suk, J. (2001). *Postcolonial Paradoxes in French Caribbean Writing.* New York: Oxford University Press Inc., p. 3.

42 Idem. P. 2.

44 Depaepe, M. & Rompaey, L. (1995). In het teken van de bevoogding. De educatieve actie in Belgisch-Kongo

However, as Brereton indicated, the end of the colonial period did not usher in the end of biased accounts.

Postcolonial states typically struggle to create a "universalist" historical narrative, a single linear story which captures the "whole" past of the new nation, presumably the intention of the Florida legislator with respect to the history of the not so new nation they belong to. The historical narratives often produced by ethnic groups or local/regional communities may be seen as a threat to this single narrative. Generally the kind of narrative produced before and after independence by former colonies centers on heroic anticolonial struggles, culminating in the attainment of formal nationhood, and usually ignoring or obfuscating internal divisions whether of ethnicity, region, class, or gender.[46]

However warranted the post-colonial mistrust may be, there is a need to overcome an overly rancorous type of postcolonial studies. Paraphrasing Hooper, we could say that once the differences between the colonial and post-colonial discourses have been aired — not effaced—, the latter can be made less contentious.[47] Post-colonialism thus becomes more tolerant of methodological differences. Slemon draws further upon this conclusion:

> If the field of post-colonial critical studies resembles a geographical terrain upon which discordant methodologies scramble agonistically for purchase, it also remains the one institutional location upon which the idea of anti-colonialist human agency can trouble the monologic droning of Western self-reference, and can insert within that drone-note the babble of cultural alterity …. I like the noisy discordance of post-colonial differences, and I welcome its clarity.[48]

(1908-1960). Leuven/Apeldoorn: Garant.

45 Cfr. Depaepe, M. (2006). Dealing with the historical paradoxes of a globalized educationalisation – A way to write the "New" cultural history of education? in *St. Martin Studies (*2), pp. 151-161.

46 Brereton, B. (2007). Contesting the Past: Narratives of Trinidad & Tobago History in *New West Indian Guide*, (81: 3 & 4), pp. 169-196, p. 170.

47 Glenn Hooper is elaborating on different authors on post-colonialism writing in Hooper, G., Graham, C. & Hooper, G. 2002). *Irish and Postcolonial Writing.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 10. Here he is discussing Slemon, S. (1995). The Scramble for Post-Colonialism, in Tiffin and Lawson (eds.), *The Post-Colonial Studies Reade.* London: Arnold.

48 Slemon, S. (1995). P. 15.

Since neutrality is hardly possible, it is essential that we ask ourselves what elements of the European analytical criteria[49] can and must be adapted to one's reality when trying to re-tell the story of St. Maarten's history of education. In the postcolonial discourse, we are often simultaneously collaborators and opponents, victims and accomplices.[50] The core of the post-colonial critique of colonial history writing must also be brought to bear on post-colonial historical explorations themselves. It would be unscholarly to merely replace the colonial story, with its Euro-centric bias, with new stories, with their own ethnic or class- or gender-based biases. Such an endeavor would betray the ultimate goal of academic research in the field of history writing, namely, the proposal of defensible descriptive and explanatory narratives.

Academic acceptability will, therefore, be vouchsafed by a work's transparency and the degree to which scholars can justify their method. This will require that historians reveal the ways in which their data were collected (including whose voice it represents), pieced together and interpreted. Methodological questions are, therefore, not redundant. On the contrary, they take on paramount importance. Since this research is based primarily on the account of our interviewees, we shall now turn to the issue of the relationship between written and oral history (or histories).

WRITTEN AND ORAL HISTORIES

The duality between written and oral histories has important implications for the writing of Caribbean history. Whereas the written form has been understood as European, modern, urban, the oral form has often been associated with African, folklore and rural areas.

49 We have dealt with this questions in: George, M. & Van Enckevort, M. (2010). Identifying education in a global world: Education on St. Maarten, a Caribbean search for belonging in George, M. (ed.), *International Explorations In Education: Belgium, India, St. Maarten (The Netherlands Antilles), Suriname and Vietnam.* Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing, pp. 59-65.

50 Cfr. Depaepe, M. (2004). How should the History of Education be Written? Some reflections about the nature of the discipline from the perspective of the reception of our work in *Studies in Philosophy and Education,* 23 (5), pp. 333-345.

Both the written and the oral traditions are well developed and used in the Caribbean. Nevertheless, because the written tradition (i.e. the evidence/documentation theory based on written documents) can be arguably described as having to date ignored the lives and institutions of most average people, the oral modality has not been granted its due importance. Written documentation has often been taken as the exclusive source of true knowledge of the past. However, since most of the early written documentation was under the control or supervision of the colonial masters, the written tradition of the Caribbean may very well be seen as colonial —as history from above or from the outside.

Caribbean history was consequently, more often than not, written from the perspective of outsiders, or at least from the perspective of people who had problems identifying completely with their Caribbean geo-social surroundings. The colonized peoples had their views, but these were generally not written down. They were handed down or conveyed through stories, poems, songs and dances. We can also understand their history in terms of negro spirituals, representing the narratives of the black renaissance; calypso songs, for example, by Harry Belafonte in Trinidad;[52] or the traditional songs of the Surinamese Winti[53] religion.[54] Theirs was an oral history —a history from below or from the inside.

52 See McGill, L. (2005). *Constructing Black Selves: Caribbean American Narratives and the Second Generation,* New York: New York University Press. Harry Belafonte was born in the United States of America from Jamaican & Martiniquan parents.

53 The Winti religion is the traditional religion of the Afro Surinamese which came with the slaves from Africa. It is a variant of the *Voodun* religion.

54 See our previous research on those topics in the Caribbean: George, M. (2010). Laying down the foundations for Caribbean Theology: Idris Hamid, Kortright Davis and the ongoing challenges. Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing. And George, M. (1998). *Ontmoetingen tussen Anana en De God van Jezus in de liturgie: de Wintireligie van Suriname in dialoog met het christendom*. Unpublished master's thesis in Religious Studies, Catholic University Leuven, Belgium.

THE ROLE OF ORAL HISTORY IN HISTORICAL WRITING

History is not a closed book. It is continuously re-written and re-interpreted, just like our individual or collective memory.[55] In that process of interpretation and re-interpretation, there is a place for oral history.

Oral history refers to the historian's search for and tapping into the spoken word as a source of relevant information for historical reconstruction. This may include: culturally-sanctioned oral traditions, more or less rehearsed interviews and printed compilations of stories told about the past. Everyone has a story to tell. Each story is a piece of broader stories, which have been lived inside and out. For, indeed, the memories of our lives are organized into stories.

Although the concept of oral history is relatively new, the methodology is ancient. The tradition of storytelling has always existed. In ancient Greece, interviews were employed to find out what had happened during a particular event. Herodotus is seen by many as one of the first historians, who engaged in writing down oral history. Furthermore, the writers of the medieval chronicles often relied on the stories that they had heard from oral sources.[56]

Oral history is still more than merely quoting oral sources. It constitutes:

> (…) the systematic collection of living people's testimony about their own experiences. Oral history is not folklore, gossip, hearsay, or rumour. Oral historians attempt to verify their findings, analyze them and place them in an accurate historical context. Oral historians are also concerned with storage of their findings for use by later scholars.[57]

This especially applies to interviews, since the informants are given the chance to recount their lives or to speak about special events. There is even mention of 'remembering-activism,' when groups demand that their stories be heard.[58] Researchers will seek to dig

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55 Leydesdorff, S. (2004). *De mensen en de woorden: Geschiedenis op basis van verhalen*. Amsterdam: Selma Leydesdorff en J.M. Meulenhoff bv., p. 9.

56 Cfr. Evans, J. (1995). The Father of Oral History, in *Virginia Quarterly Review* (1), pp. 556-559.

57 Judith Moyer, Step-by-step guide to Oral history, 1993.
http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html. (Accessed on 22 December 2001).

58 Leydesdorff, S. (2004). P10.

deeper into their interviewees' past, for instance, by asking them to elaborate on aspects of their recollections or to explore different corners of their memories.[59]

Interviewing people need not necessarily be linked to an event. The capture of known life-stories is common. It involves interviewing elderly people about their lives. These interviews often provide an interesting insight into the past, into a way of life that no longer exists.

According to Bleyen & Van Molle,[60] oral history can be understood in four differing ways. Firstly, it can be seen as an activity. It is telling the past and listening to people's memories. It represents a certain coming to life again, a living history. Secondly, it can refer to the product of the telling of and listening to the stories about the past. In this sense, it gives rise to oral sources, which can give certain —albeit never direct— access to the past. Thirdly, oral history can be the result of the research process using interviews. This constitutes written history based on the *stories* from the past. Lastly, it can refer to the research method which seeks to find answers to historical questions or case studies.

The writing down of oral history falls under the aspect of qualitative research. It is mostly about case studies. Instead of working with statistics, it deals with the discourse, which is usually found in stories. Given that interpretation is typical of qualitative research, it is also part and parcel of oral history and interviews. Oral history is both a cross-over-methodology and an interdisciplinary endeavor.[61]

THE USEFULNESS OF ORAL HISTORY

Oral sources of information are sought not only to fill in the lacunae in written sources, but also to arrive at knowledge, which would otherwise not be available. Information may or

59 Walbert, K. (2002). *The Value of Oral History*. Learn NC editions 2002. http://www.learnnc.org/

(Accessed on 12 March 2001).

60 Cfr. Bleyen, J. & Van Molle, L. (2012). *Wat is mondelinge geschiedenis?*. Leuven: Uitgeverij Acco, 2012, pp. 13-18.

61 Bleyen, J. & Van Molle, L. (2012) p. 17 quoting Abrams, L. (2010). *Oral History Theory,* London & New York: Routledge, pp. 2-3.

may not be available due to the state of written sources or their nature. Thompson believes that the method of transposing oral history into the written word could change the way that history is written since history-writing would then be more in touch with society. In other words, it would contain more research that is focused on more socially and locally relevant issues.

The information gathered will, of course, be more than written records can supply; for instance, it will include the mood behind the events and not just their fixed records. Oral history allows researchers to learn about the perspectives of individuals, who might not otherwise appear in the historical records. This gives a voice to those whose voice was left out by official history writers.

In the context of this research, the information, which we are after, cannot be expected to be found in the official archives. Official sources would not provide the researchers with information about the thoughts and feelings of the teachers and students while they were in, for example, a math lesson of a particular (colonial) teacher. For a writer of educational history, who wants to present the unofficial story of the colonial classroom practice, oral interviews of people, whose stories never made it into the written archives, can open up new vistas.[62] Nowadays, technology has made it possible for researchers to record their interviews; this has expanded the definition of recorded sources.

Once the researchers, who are engaged in the contemporary recording oral history, publish the results of their work, this oral history enters the stage of history writing and, thus, also of historiography. Said otherwise, although the recording of oral history always concerns the more recent past, since the informants should be alive to be able to tell their story,[63] the posterior use of the recorded voices ushers oral history into the broader process of history-writing.

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62 Cfr. George, M. (2006). Getting the Job Done! Let the Sisters Speak. Historical development of Catholic education on St. Maarten (1890-1990): an oral history account, in *St. Martin Studies* (2). St. Martin: University of St. Martin, pps. 165-175.

63 Cfr. Vansina, J. (1981). Oral tradition and its methodology. In Ki-Zerbo, I. (ed.), *UNESCO General History of Africa I: Methodology and African Prehistory*. Paris: UNESCO - London: Heineman - Berkeley: University of California Press.

Oral history becomes the systematic collection of living people's testimonies and encompasses the relationship between official history, which is transcribed in books, and individual memories.[64] The stories about the experiences of common people and their everyday memories are historically important. When someone does not collect and preserve those memories, clearly, at some point they will no longer be alive to tell their stories and their traces will disappear forever. The role of oral history is to particularly safeguard those types of stories, because they are valuable treasures of the community.[65] Oral history can also help to trace how the historical consciousness of a society is formed and develops. This is as important for researchers as it is for everyone, who uses interviews and storytelling for their professions.[66]

Recording oral history (e.g. by means of interviews) is not a problem-free enterprise. Some scholars like Michael Frisch have criticized the over-evaluation of oral history as 'Anti-History.' In his view,

> 'oral historical evidence because of its immediacy and emotional resonance" can at times be viewed "as something almost beyond interpretation or accountability, as a direct window on the feelings and (...) on the meaning of past experience.'[67]

This caveat is reinforced by the fact that, depending on one's perspective at the time, people seem to remember different aspects of the past. One cannot detach the oral representation of the *past* from the relationship of narrator and audience from which it arose.[68]

History writers using oral sources must therefore never relinquish the onus of critical analysis. They will need to assess the reliability of the narrator and of their narration. At this

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64 Leydesdorff, S. (2004), p. 9.

65 Moyer, M. (1993). *Step-by-step guide to Oral history*.
http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html (accessed 22 December 2001).

66 Portelli, A. (1997). Oral History as a Genre, in Portelli, A., *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue.* London: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 3-24.

67 Cfr. Frisch, M.H. (1990). *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft And Meaning of Oral and Public History*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

68 Tonkin, E. (1992). *Narrating Our Pasts: The Social Construction of oral History.* Cambridge: University Press, p. 2.

point, researchers must resort to triangulation as a mechanism to limit the arbitrariness and the possible biases that could be contained in their informant(s)' account. According to Karin Barber:

> To grasp their historical intent we need to view representation of pastness as literature; to grasp their literature mode we need to view them as part of social action; to grasp their role as social action we need to see their historical intent.[69]

Therefore, it will be necessary not only to interview someone who possesses relevant knowledge, but also to interview more than one person. Furthermore, ideally, the interviewees should be people, who represent different angles of the story. For an accurate oral historical account, the person who you are interviewing must have lived through that event or during that period of time and must be able to recall details and easily recount other memories.

Researchers of oral history face the question how to choose to whom to listen. History offers meaning to people and that is why historical accounts are still given today. The voice of the past matters to the present, but whose voice —or voices— are to be heard?[70] On whose authority is the interviewees' (re-) construction of the past based? For whom is it intended? Which one of the voices heard conveys the voice of the past, especially when we consider that human actions inhabit the world of meaning, not of physics? The human past is a semantic reality and, as such, has many voices and senses.

All of the above raises the issue of objectivity, but also of subjectivity. In the case of oral history, the most subjective accounts could be understood as an objective source if and when we are interested in a person's feelings, their evaluation or reflection on past events. However, despite the subjectivity involved in every re-telling of the past, interviews will often include factual components, which will presuppose a certain degree of objectivity.

The accusation of absolute subjectivity that was leveled against oral history is neither totally fair nor objective. When speaking of "oral history", the word "subjectivity does not

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69 Barber, K. (1989). Interpreting oríkì as history and as literature, in Barber, K. and De Moraes Farias, P.F. (eds.), *Discourse and its Disguises: The Interpretation of African Oral Texts*. Birmingham: Centre of West African Studies (1), pp. 13-23, p. 15.

70 Thompson, P. (1988). *The voice of the Past*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, (2nd edition), p. VIII.

suggest that it is only concerned about a personally colored story that, therefore, has little value. Rather, it is about a personal view, which gives us new insights into how someone lived during a certain age and provides meaningful insights into that age as well. Additionally, historians have been using very personal sources for a very long time in order to better understand the mood or sentiment of a period. For example, personal documents, diaries, autobiographies and photographs are common source material.[71]

Each source is of course in some way subjective and only represents the views of an individual or a limited number of persons on a specific historical topic. The only thing that the historian needs to demonstrate is the reliability of the source. Interviews are always the result of an interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee, between two subjectivities, each with their own perspective.[72]

Nonetheless, dates and places are both objective and relative. Time and place depend on the measures used: a fixed point of reference must be agreed upon.

Time is divided horizontally into periods and eras, and "hung" on key events which operate as partitions and as interpreters of the meaning of each period.[73]

Events are of themselves neither dated nor mapped. They have an existence in themselves, which sometimes escapes us. We understand them and assign them their place according to our human frame of mind. By agreeing on conventional measuring systems, we can assess whether the information that our informants tell us about past events are only true for them but also true for others.

The research question will determine whether the researcher, who employs oral sources, must zoom in on the more subjective content ("true for him/her") or whether he/she ought to navigate between the subjective lines and go in search of the more objective details that may emerge out of the accounts ("true for him/her and true for others").

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71 Dekker, R. (2000). De erfenis van Jacques Pressser. Waardering en gebruik van egodocumenten in de geschiedwetenschap, in Brinkgree, C. and Davis, K. e.a. (red.). *Levensverhalen.* Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift. Amsterdam, pp. 19-38.

72 Leydesdorff, S. (2004), p. 48.

73 Portelli, A. (1981). The peculiarities of oral history, in *History Workshop* (12), pp. 96-107, p. 101.

History writing is based on the interpretation of data. This is particularly true when oral sources are used. Not only do history writers interpret what they hear, their oral informants do this as well. The role of memory in the act of looking back and the re-telling of the past can never be stressed enough.[74] The telling of a story preserves the teller from oblivion.[75] The tale itself creates a special time, "a time outside time".[76] In order to narrate, the narrators need to connect with their own memories and with those of their audiences.

The narrators, their audiences and the history writers will also have to tap into the structure of the narration. The past that the narrators reconstruct must continually be reconstructed. Oral accounts are, therefore, not merely an exercise of providing information, but also an interpretive task done by people, who have their own personal agendas and interests.[77]

History writers using oral sources will, therefore, have to ask these questions: Were the various interviewees differently situated in relationship to the events under discussion?

Might they have different agendas or perspectives, leading them to tell different versions of the same story? Might intervening events — for example, ideological shifts between the time of the events under discussion and the time of the interview, or subsequent popular cultural accounts of these events — have influenced later memories?[78]

In short, researchers embarking on oral history projects ought to bear in mind that the variables of perspective and interpretation, which are involved in oral accounts (both in

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74 See authors on this topic: Hodgson, G. (1976). *America in Our Time,* New York: Random House, p. 5; Trillin, C. (1977). Remembrance of Moderate Past in *New Yorker*, p. 85; Cliff, K. (1960). There's a Footnote to History! Memory and the History of Martin Luther King's October 1960 Arrest and Its Aftermath, in *Journal of American History* (84:2), p. 594.

75 Portelli, A. (1981). The time of my life: functions of time in oral history. *International Journal of Oral History* (2:3), pp. 162-180, p. 162.

76 Tonkin, E. (1992), p. 3.

77 Depaepe, M. (2006). Progressive education: an alternative or an illusion? About the implementation of educational innovations in Belgium and elsewhere in *St. Martin Studies* (2). St. Martin: University of St. Martin, pp. 151-161.

78 Shopes, L. What is Oral History? http://www.historymatters.gmu.edu/mse/oral/interpret.html. (Accessed on 13 July 2009)

the informants' telling and the historians' posterior use of the information), deter from over-rating oral history. Nonetheless, oral history still has a corrective and complementary role to play in historical reconstruction. For instance, when Caribbean history or histories were solely based upon primary and/or secondary written sources, the context, within which the events under study took place, might be misrepresented. Some important segments of the past might be ignored, whilst others would be given more attention than they actually deserved and be considered to be more representative than they actually were.

Used critically and methodically, oral sources can carry the countless voiceless protagonists of our local and regional histories. These histories are part of the cultural heritage of a community, upon which UNESCO has increasingly been focusing its attention.[79] Consequently, one can suggest that oral history is an adequate means to allow individuals to revisit their past, explore the cultural identity of their group or nation and enhance respect for cultural diversity both inside and outside their own communities. Recording oral history or histories could, therefore, function as a tool to be employed not only by academic researchers, but also by high school and college students.[80]

For the historian, oral history is not an aim in itself but a tool. Historians allow personal stories to become historical records and answer questions about the past. By doing so, they enrich the existing knowledge of the past by acknowledging the voice of people, who would otherwise have been muted by approaches concentrated exclusively on documentary evidence. [81] One of the strategies – perhaps the primary one — to tap into stories and record oral history is through personal interviews.

79 UNESCO (1976). *Netherlands Antilles: Education, Issues and priorities for development*. Paris: Unesco.

80 GEORGE, M., AbdusSalam SCATOLINI, S. & BOU MOSLEH, D. (2011). Integrating Local Heritage into the school curriculum, in *Journal of Education*, India, forthcoming.

81 Bleyen, J. & Van Molle, L. (2012), pp. 16-18.

METHODOLOGY OF INTERVIEWS

Interviews allow the information obtained from written and printed sources to be nuanced, looked at differently or even corrected. In cases where these sources do not allow critiquing hypotheses from other angles than those documented, interviews fill in the lacunae by providing new information and facilitating alternative perspectives. Interviews can actually become the main source for historical research.[82]

Judith Moyer elaborates on the sequence needed for the recording of oral history by means of interviews. She provides a list for the researcher, and explains how to ask questions (selecting, listening, verifying, comparing and relating)[83] and prepare field notes as well as gives other useful information.[84] Much of it comes down to: 'doing the right thing and 'minding your manners'.

You do not go to somebody's house armed with questions and shoot your questions at the inhabitants like a machine gun, but you engage in a conversation. Oral history is thus all about interpretation and action not technique. On the other hand interpretation and narrative do not take overhand.[85]

WRITING THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION

This project is not about history writing in general, but more specifically about the history of (primary) education in St. Maarten, and draws especially on the unwritten stories of those involved. When the "history of education" becomes the focus, the phenomena and processes of education and schooling are studied in their historical dimension. While the methodology used is the scientific discipline of "history writing", the contents of the research are fairly diverse and relate to the diverse fields of education (e.g. formal and

82 Bleyen, J. & Van Molle, L. (2012), pp. 16-18.

83 Leydesdorff, S. (2004), p. 11.

84 Moyer, J. (1993). *Step-by-step guide to Oral history*.
http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html. (Accessed on 22 December 2001).

85 Portelli, A. (1997). Oral History as a Genre, in Portelli, A. *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue.* London: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 3-24.

informal education, school realities, innovation processes, youth care, institutions for handicapped learners, history of educational sciences, etc.). In most cases, the research focus is limited to the understanding of the evolution of the educational mentality and practice. Strictly speaking, it is not the task of educational history writers to use history as a tributary to the creation of new pedagogical theories. As such, their competency is in writing *history*. How the history of education should be written is, therefore, a still much debated question. Depaepe's suggestion on how it should *not* be written might be an easier approach:

Our message went that historians of education ought to think of themselves as historians, and not as servants of any particular pedagogical practice, theory, idea or whatever. That they would best avoid the pitfalls of ahistorical utilitarianism as well as of the legitimizing and/or mythologizing belief in a particular pedagogical system, in which the history of the specialist field is so rich.[86]

Notwithstanding the above, the history of education can still indirectly influence and critique research being conducted in other educational areas. Educational research is often multidisciplinary, as Depaepe observes:

> […] there is not, nor will there ever be, one single true conception on the history of education, so that we shall probably have to learn to live with methodological pluralism.[87]

For instance, studies in educational history can help explain and inspire changes by situating them alongside the process of social development, showing that societies are in continual interaction. Social phenomena are not absolute; they always remain relative to numerous variables.

Progress has its discontinuities as well as its continuities. Education belongs to the realm of cultural phenomena over a long duration of time. History writers also find themselves within cultural processes that color their analysis, for instance, by imposing

86 Depaepe, M. (2004). How should the history of education be written? Some reflections about the nature of the discipline from the perspective of the reception of our work, in *Studies in Philosophy and* Education 23 (5), pp. 333-345, p. 336.

87 Depaepe, M. (1993). History of education anno 1992, p. 3.

present concerns and preoccupations upon the past. Even when opposing paradigms can be used to explain change, development —also in the discipline of the history of education— still presupposes a continuum. "This continuum presents itself as a richly checkered process of intersecting outcomes".[88]

After analyzing the history of education in St. Maarten, it appears that the pattern of pillarization (*verzuiling*)[89], which has been a feature of Dutch culture and society throughout the first part of the 20th century, has also become a part of St. Maarten's educational praxis. Besides the *pillarization* of education, the Netherlands Antilles has adapted an educational system mirrored on the Dutch system.[90] By forcing an alien response to foreign variables upon St. Maarten, the colonizers alienated the St. Maarteners from themselves and their most immediate insular reality. This strategy was not unique to the Dutch colonizers; such a process has usually gone hand-in-hand with colonialism. The Belgians applied something similar in Congo, where it was said that:

> (To) the degree that institutionalized educational practice was a factor of power and social control, education seemed (...) to lead to 'keeping down' rather than 'raising up'.[91]

88 Depaepe, M. (2006). Dealing with the historical paradoxes of a globalized educationalisation – A way to write the "New" cultural history of education?, in *St. Martin Studies,* vol. 1, St. Martin: University of St. Martin, pp. 33-45.

89 Pillarisation (*verzuiling* in Dutch) is the politico-denominational segregation of Dutch and Belgian society. These societies were (and in some areas, still are) "vertically" divided into several segments or "pillars" (zuilen, singular: zuil) according to different religions or ideologies. These pillars all had their own social institutions: their own newspapers, broadcasting organisations, political parties, trade unions, banks, schools, hospitals, universities, scouting organisations and sports clubs. Some companies even hired only personnel of a specific religion or ideology. This led to a situation where many people had no personal contact with people from another pillar. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pillarization. (Accessed 26 October 2001).

90 Van Enckevort, M. (2006). Decolonizing the Educational System on St. Martin, or How to Teach Globalization under the Flamboyant Tree, in *St. Martin Studies* (1). St. Martin: University of St. Martin, pp. 143-148.

91 Depaepe, M. (1997). Demythologizing the Educational Past: An Endless Task in History of Education, in *Historical Studies in Education / Revue d'histoire de l'éducation,* (9), pp. 208-223.

This research project intends to recover the voice of the local population involved in education (administration, personnel, students, and parents) of St. Maarten. Its purpose is historical; it does not directly aim to produce a *critique* of the Dutch Antillean colonial education. The primary aim is to chart the developments in primary education in St. Maarten, especially from the point of the view of the local school population.

PROVISIONAL REMARKS

The conceptual framework that we have presented tells us that it is neither easy nor simple to write about the history of education. This is because the history of education is much broader than the history of mere "schooling". Furthermore, educational history should not be studied in isolation from other cultural and social movements. Education helps to transmit culture and the values of that culture from one generation to another. This means that the history of education studies the entire process of social development.

Writing about the history of education in St. Maarten challenged us to look into the methodology of oral history and at different authors, who discuss the complexities of writing about the history of education and the use of oral history. Based on our research, we know that there are still many questions which need to be answered.

We will use this theoretical framework to better understand the context of our research topic in the next chapter. In this context, we will elaborate more on St. Maarten and look at how the educational system was shaped and developed on the Dutch half of the island. Furthermore, we will try to get a clearer idea of how local politics influenced the changes in education.

CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

THE CARIBBEAN

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the main elements that have shaped the political contours of St. Maarten during the period leading up to the signing of the Charter for of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1954 and afterwards.

St. Maarten: Caribbean and Dutch

The context within which education in St. Maarten must be envisaged is threefold: its position within the Netherlands Antilles (also called Dutch Antilles), the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the Caribbean. We shall first deal with the Caribbean.

Defining the Caribbean

The identity of the region, as the way in which its individuals, peoples and cultures define and (re-)present themselves, is analyzed within a number of co-ordinates. Authors as well as ordinary people use a number of criteria in order to demarcate the contours of the

Caribbean.[92] Braudel drew attention to two important coordinates for history writing: the geographical and the temporal. In his view, they reflect the essential matrix within which individuals, peoples and cultures come into being and interact. In other words, human history entails a radical relationship between humans and their geography within time.[93]

One way to delimit our research is to define it according to a certain geographical criterion. Even though in the English-speaking world, St. Maarten is commonly referred to as an island located in the 'West Indies', in this research, we will speak of the Caribbean Basin. This change in terminology reflects a shift of perspective. The 'West Indies' still refers to Europe as the in-between point separating the East Indies from the West Indies. The term defines the socio-geographical reality of the Caribbean region in terms of its conquerors.

Those who take geography as the measuring stick for determining what 'Caribbean' means will focus on insularity. In this case, the Caribbean encompasses all 23 islands situated between the tip of the Florida Peninsula and the northern coast of South America.[94]

Nevertheless, this exclusive geographical criterion presents some inner weaknesses. As Braudel insightfully indicates, the geographical coordinate ought not to be seen as separate from the temporal one; they exist as part of the entire human lived experience. To better understand the Caribbean, we must therefore look at the interactions that have affected it in the past and the aspirations of its protagonists for the future. The Caribbean is far more than a cluster of islands in the Caribbean Sea.

Because of the different models of conquest and colonial partition, there has not always been much regional contact between the insular Caribbean societies. They have kept in touch with the so-called motherlands rather than with each other. Language and political systems have divided the region and created parallel identities, identifiable by their languages such as Spanish, French, English (British/American) and Dutch. The Hispanic

92 Cf. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* 1995 (29), Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, p. 721. Four criteria are given here: insularity, colonialism, the sugar plantation and slavery.

93 Braudel, F. (1972). *The Mediterranean,* (1). Great Brittain: WM Collins Sons Ltd. And Harper & Row Pub. Inc., p. 23.

94 Thompson, A. (1997). *The Haunting Past. Politics, Economics and Race in Caribbean life.* Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, p. 3.

islands of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Republic of Santo Domingo, for instance, present a very real double identity, being both Caribbean and Latin-American.[95] Consequently, the fact that Cuba and St. Maarten are geographically nearby does not mean that Cuba has directly affected St. Maarten more than the Netherlands; neither has St. Maarten influenced Cuba more than the USA.

The problem with the insularity criterion is that it either overlooks or underestimates the cultural co-ordinates and it omits countries that have shared a common genesis and socio-historical development. Such a criterion would be comparable to the thought-patterns at work in European colonization and partition of Africa, which in most cases was oblivious to the original pre-colonial social configuration. That is why we are not interested in the Caribbean topography alone, but in the socio-geographical contours of "the Caribbean," the human habitat, not the bare geography.

The socio-geographical criterion pays attention to a combination of factors. On the one hand, there is, indeed, the geographical factor: the physical point of reference remains the Caribbean Sea, yet, it is no longer limited to the islands. On the other hand, there are the socio-historical factors, which include realities such as the colonization process, the socio-political institutions of colonialism, the socio-economic structures and the actual configuration of Caribbean society.

From the application of geographical and social criteria, there emerges a major geographic division of the islands between the Greater and the Lesser Antilles. The Caribbean is then expanded to include countries that are located on the Central and South American mainland, such as, Guyana (ex-British Guyana), Suriname (ex-Dutch Guyana), Cayenne (current French Guyana), Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Belize and Mexico.[96] Premdas' working paper contributes to this discussion and finds that:

> The truth, however, is that the Caribbean even as a geographical expression is a very imprecise place that is difficult to define. Some analysts include Florida, the Yucatan,

95 Cf. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* 1995 (29). Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, p. 721.

96 George, M. (2010). Laying down the foundations for Caribbean Theology: Idris Hamid, Kortright Davis and the ongoing challenges. Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing, p. 9.

> Nicaragua, Columbia, and Venezuela, while others exclude them altogether. It is not only an imaginary region but one that is arbitrarily appointed to its designation. It will be difficult to pinpoint precisely where this Caribbean place is, for no country carries the name Caribbean either separately or in hyphenated form.[97]

Needless to say, the language barriers and the costs of transportation make contact between the various areas of the region difficult.

The relevance of language or better differences of language has been accurately highlighted by Rex Nettleford, according to whom: "…the Caribbean on this basis [speaking of tongues] seems a Tower of Babel. And so it is, being the crossroads of languages, which are the languages of former colonisers and conquerors providing *linguae francae* for the thirty or more millions of souls, who now congregate in that crossroads and are seeking to give common expression to the common soil of history and existential reality that they share."[98]

A comprehensive description of the socio-geography of the Caribbean is hard to find. This is, in fact, a real obstacle one comes up against even when intending to buy a travel guide. History and geography have become intertwined. The colonial past has divided the physical space of the Caribbean into cultural spaces that wheel around a common language (i.e. Spanish, English, French, and Dutch), legal traditions and acquired social codes. There was even a Danish and Latvian Caribbean, at least at one time and for some years.

Caribbean societies are not obvious realities. They can truly be described as international creations that began as the result of European expansion in the 15th century, one of the precursors to today's globalization. Consequently, the societies living in the Caribbean basin are not uniform. They are rather a collection of small nations, colonies and territories struggling to forge their own economic and political identities. They all have an astonishingly diverse cultural life in common and possess a remarkable and often tragic history.[99] Schwab sums it all up by saying that:

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97 Premdas, R. (1996). Ethnicity and Identity in the Caribbean: Decentering a Myth, in *Working Paper* (234), pp 1-47, p. 2.

98 Nettleford, R. (1994). The Caribbean: Crossroads of the Americas, in Alan Cobley (ed.) *Crossroads of Empire, The Europe-Caribbean Connection 1492-1992.* Barbados: Stephenson's Lithopress Ltd., p. 2.

99 George, M. (2010). *Laying down the foundations for Caribbean Theology:* p.10.

> [The Caribbean represents] a wonderful analogy for a history and culture produced by startling combinations. Begin with two remarkable primitive Indian societies, add the influence of the 16th-century gold seeking Spaniards and their European rivals: the French, English, Dutch, even the knight of Malta; add pirates, religious and political refugees, and a huge African slave culture, then stir in Hindus, Jews, and Rastafarians and you have the dizzying recipe that makes up these islands.[100]

This whole mixture owes its existence to a series of historical factors that one must explore separately in order to understand some of the mechanisms that have forged the identity of each individual Caribbean society. Since the object of our study is St. Maarten's primary education, we shall now focus on one part of the larger Caribbean basin, namely, the Dutch Antilles (to which St. Maarten belongs) and Aruba.

THE DUTCH ANTILLES AND ARUBA

The Dutch Antilles

The Kingdom of the Netherlands consists of three territorial entities: one on the European mainland, namely, the Netherlands and two in the Caribbean basin, i.e. Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles.[101] This tripartite union comprises one kingdom that is then divided into three countries.

The country of the Netherlands Antilles comprises five island territories: Curaçao, Bonaire, St. Maarten, Saba and Sint Eustatius (or "Statia"). Geographically, the Netherlands Antilles are subdivided into two groups: the Leeward Islands (Curaçao and Bonaire, about 50 km north of Venezuela) and the Windward Islands (Saba, Sint Eustatius and St. Maarten, some 160 km east of Puerto Rico). Miami is about 2.5 hours by plane from Curaçao, the largest and the most dominant island within the island group. The capital is Willemstad.

The Windward Islands area of the Netherlands Antilles is 960 km2, with a coastline of 364 km. The climate is tropical (12 degrees from the equator), but cooled by Northeast

100 Schwab, D. (ed.) (1996), *Insight Guides: Caribbean, The Lesser Antilles*. Great Britain: APA Publications, p. 19. See also Hillman, R. & D'Agostino, T. (ed.) (2003), *Understanding the Contemporary Caribbean.* Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publisher, Inc.

101 Cf. Statuut voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden, [hence forth: *Statuut*], (2002). Preambule, in *Kluwer College Bundel 2002-2003 Wetteksten*, Deventer: Uitgeverij Kluwer BV.

trade winds. The average temperature is 27°C. Rains fall from October to February, mostly at night. The landscape is generally hilly with a volcanic interior. The highest point is 862m at Mount Scenery in Saba. Natural resources include phosphates and salt, yet, only 10% of the land is cultivable.[103]

The hurricane season runs from July to November. The Windward Islands are affected by hurricanes almost on a yearly basis, causing considerable destruction. They rarely threaten Curaçao and Bonaire, which lie south of the Caribbean hurricane belt. In fact, only three hurricanes have come near the Netherlands Leeward islands in 20th century.

General Data

In a recent census report, the population of the Netherlands Antilles was estimated at 210,000, with an annual growth rate of 1.06%. Of the total population, 144,000 live in Curaçao, where the official (and used) language is Dutch, but 90% of the local population speaks Papiamento, a Creole language resulting from a mixture of Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and English. Spanish and English are also widely spoken, particularly in Willemstad.

Ethnically, the population is made up of people with black (85%), Amerindian (especially in Aruba), white, Asian (Indian and Chinese) and Middle Eastern backgrounds, all with varying degrees of "purity" and admixture. Although 80% of the population is Catholic, there is also a strong Protestant presence as well as recognizable Jewish, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist communities. All these groups live in religious and ethnic harmony.

The linguistic, racial and religious make-up of the Dutch Caribbean reveals a clear influence of the colonial forces. It may safely be said that the colonisers made the Caribbean as we know it today. The genius of the Caribbean people is shown through the fact that they have taken the multiculturalism that was forced on them and turned it into interculturalism, that is, real interaction and mutual cultural cross-fertilization.[104]

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103 Cf. Bakker, J. & Van Der Veer, R. (1999). *Nederlandse Antillen en Aruba: Mensen, Politiek, Economie, Cultuur, Milieu*. Boskoop: Macula bv, p. 73.

104 The essential Caribbean interwovenness cannot be denied even by the current nationalistic groups that pretend to discover some sort of "purity" in a region characterized by *créolité*, often as a reaction to globalisation and their experience of discrimination in the diaspora. See Bernabé, J., Chamoiseau, P. &

The Spaniards' first contact with Curaçao and Aruba was in 1499. The peaceful native inhabitants, a tribe of Arawak Indians, were mostly transported to the Hispaniola. In 1634, Curaçao fell to the Dutch and became an important base for expeditions against the Spanish. During the 18th century, Curaçao became a trading port for pirates, American rebels, Dutch merchants, Spaniards and Creoles from the mainland. The English took Curaçao briefly in 1800, but Dutch rule was restored in 1816 and the port was declared free.[105]

Migration is an essential part of most Caribbean Islands, including the Netherlands Antilles. Islands with a positive economic growth witness the arrival of large groups of immigrants, while islands with less economic growth see their population decrease.[106]

The income of both the Dutch Antilles and Aruba is derived mostly from tourism, oil refining (in the Leeward Islands) and development aid. Because of this, the small islands are strongly dependent on foreign markets. Due to the fact that Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles do not have many raw materials, and hardly have an agrarian or manufacturing sector, almost everything needs to be imported: the beef comes from Argentina, the fridges from the USA and the oil from Venezuela. The economy is open and vulnerable and the Islands are unable to influence the world market.[107]

Government

The Netherlands Antilles is a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, with full autonomy in internal affairs. It is a parliamentary democracy and is politically stable. The government of the Netherlands is responsible for its defense and foreign affairs.[108]

Confiant, R. (1998). *Éloge de la créolité*. Parijs, p. 28; and Ormerod, B. (1998). The Martinican concept of "creoleness": A multiracial redefinition of culture, in *Mots Pluriels* (7).

105 Hartog, J. (1964). *De Bovenwindse Eilanden*.Aruba: De Wit N.V., pp. 1-7.

106 Cf. Bakker, J. & Van Der Veer (1999), p. 55.

107 Idem, p. 50.

108 Williams, E. (1970). *From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean 1492-1969*. Great Britain: St. Edmundsbury Press Limited, p. 499.

The legal system is based on Dutch civil law and some elements from English Common Law. Appeals from the Netherlands Antilles courts go to the Netherlands Supreme Court in The Hague.

The monarch of the Netherlands is the head of state of the whole Kingdom.[109] The Queen (or King) of the Netherlands appoints the Governor General of the Netherlands Antilles for a six-year term.[110] The office of the Governor General is based in Curaçao. Each island territory has a Lieutenant Governor, who is also appointed by the Dutch Monarch for a six-year term to chair his own Island Council and the Executive Council (which is appointed by the elected Island Council).

While the central government situated in Curaçao deals mainly with taxation, communications, public health, education, banking, law and order, company registration and economic control, the island government deals with local affairs.

Aruba

Aruba has been a Dutch possession since 1642. Together with the Dutch Antilles, from which Aruba separated in 1986, it is also legally a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.[111] Initially, it was given ten years to gain its independence from the Kingdom, but this never happened. In 1990, by its own volition, Aruba surrendered in perpetuity its treaty rights to become independent of the Netherlands, which would have taken place in 1996.

The Island is politically and economically stable and there is no movement calling for independence. The monarch of the Netherlands is the head of state, represented locally by a Governor General appointed for a six year term.

Whilst the Netherlands retains responsibility for all matters relating to defense, judicial appointments, applications for citizenship and foreign affairs, Aruba has full

109 Cf. *Statuut,* Art. 2.1.

110 Cf. *Statuut,* Art. 2.2.

111 Brereton, B. (1994). Independence and the Persistence of Colonialism in the Caribbean, in Cobley, A. (ed.), *Crossroads of Empire: The Europe-Caribbean Connection 1492-199.*Barbados: Stephenson's Lithopress Ltd., pp. 55-56.

autonomy in all matters related to internal affairs.[112] A constitution has been in place since 1986. The Island has its own democratically elected legislature of 21 members, which sits in the capital, Oranjestad. The executive consists of the Governor General and a seven-member Council of Ministers, chosen and headed by the Prime Minister.

All laws are in Dutch and the highest court is the Dutch Supreme Court in The Hague. However, English Common Law has also influenced Aruban law. It is important to note that the island has its own university, which prepares its own lawyers.[113]

History of the Government of the Netherlands Antilles

As mentioned in the previous section, the Central government or Federal government of the Territory of the Netherlands Antilles is governed according to the Kingdom's constitutional law. In order to understand the underlying variables that influence education in St. Maarten, we shall now briefly sketch the development of the constitutional macro level within which schools exist, starting with the West India Company (WIC).

FROM THE WEST INDIAN COMPANY TO COLONIAL RULING

The Dutch West India Company was established based on the example of the successful Dutch East India Company (*Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie- VOC)*. The VOC, literally translated as the United East India Company, primary focus was Indonesia. The WIC came about because:

Initially the WIC was just an instrument for warfare and pirating, where the historical Piet Heyn intercepted the Spanish silver fleet on the Cuban coast. The Islands were occupied, lost, occupied again and lost again.[114] During the period of 1620-1674 (the first phase), the WIC was conceived by Dutch merchants, who were resentful of the VOC's monopoly of trade in the East Indies. They were granted a charter for a trade monopoly[115],

112 Cf. *Statuut,* Art. 11.1,2,3.

113 The same can be said about Curaçao.

114 Cfr. Oostindie, G. (2000). *Het Paradijs overzee: De 'Nederlandse' Caraiben en Nederland*. Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij.

115 By The States-General of the United Netherlands on June 3, 1621.

the rights for shipping and trade in the West Indies by the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands.[116] In this charter, the WIC was given jurisdiction over the African slave trade in Brazil, the Caribbean and North America.[117] The WIC operated in the area of West Africa (between the Tropic of Cancer and the Cape of Good Hope) and the Americas, which included the Pacific Ocean and the eastern part of New Guinea. The intended purpose of the charter was to eliminate competition, particularly Spanish or Portuguese, between the various trading posts established by the merchants. The WIC was the leader of Dutch colonialization in the Americas. During the second phase[118], the WIC (1674-1791) was not permitted to conquer new territories and had a more limited monopoly mainly in the slave trade. It is worth noting that the WIC and the VOC ruled the scene for about 150 years.[119]

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116 The later United Kingdom of the Netherlands. Cfr. Israël, J.I. (1995). *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477-1806*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

117 From: Charter of the Dutch West India Company: 1621.
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/17th_century/westind.asp. (Accessed on 14 January 2000).

II. That, moreover, the aforesaid Company may, in our name and authority, within the limits herein before prescribed, make contracts, engagements and alliances with the limits herein before prescribed, make contracts, engagements and alliances with the princes and natives of the countries comprehended therein, and also build any forts and fortifications there, to appoint and discharge Governors, people for war, and officers of justice, and other public officers, for the preservation of the places, keeping good order, police and justice, and in like manner for the promoting of trade; and again, others in their place to put, as they from the situation of their affairs shall see fit: Moreover, they must advance the peopling of those fruitful and unsettled parts, and do all that the service of those countries, and the profit and increase of trade shall require: and the Company shall successively communicate and transmit to us such contracts and alliances as they shall have made with the aforesaid princes and nations; and likewise the situation of the fortresses, fortifications, and settlements by them taken.

118 When the WIC could not repay its debts in 1674 due to severe financial problems, the company was dissolved. Nevertheless, given the high demand for trade with the West (mainly trade in slaves), and the fact that there were many colonies still present, it was decided to establish the Second West Indies Company (also known as New West Indies Company) in 1675. This had the same commercial area as the first. All ships, fortresses, etc. were taken over by the new company. Cfr. Heijer, H. (1994). *De geschiedenis van de WIC*, Zutphen, Walburg Pers.

119 Cfr. Greig, D. (1987). *The reluctant colonists. Netherlanders abroad in the 17th and 18th centuries*. Assen: Van Gorcum.

After the WIC was permanently dissolved in 1792, due to declining revenues, the Council of the Colonies (*Raad der Colonien*) was established, which was a continuation of the colonial governing board of the WIC.[120] The colony of Curaçao was controlled by a director, a commercial agent, under the orders of a "general meeting" chosen from the *bewindhebbers* or the ruling elite. They were appointed by the governments of the participating regions. In 1791, this administration was also dissolved by the *Staten Generaal* and the management was handed over to the "Council of the Colonies", which was represented by a governor.

In 1828, all West Indian possessions were united under one government-general. In the hopes to economize, King William I came to this decision. Suriname became the leader (Governor General), while the Colony of Curaçao and Dependencies were under a director; and St. Maarten, Saba and Statia were put under the authority of a commander. The title '*Gezaghebber*' (literally, "someone who has authority") finds its origin in the Rules to the policy of the Government in the Colony of Curaçao and Dependencies Islands 1834. In 1834, the titles of director and commander were replaced by *gezaghebber*, while St. Maarten, who was put in these Rules on one line with Curaçao, received its own *gezaghebber*.

In 1848, an administrative separation came between Suriname and Curaçao. Curaçao had a governor and the other islands of Curaçao and Dependencies came under a *Gezaghebber* as the highest authority and representative of the governor.

During this difficult time, as a result of shared responsibility on the governing board and a shortage of people, material etc., the first Council of Curaçao (*Bestuurscollege*) was established.[121]

The "Colony" was the name used for Curaçao, although it consisted of the Islands of Curaçao, Aruba, Small Curaçao (Klein Curaçao), Small Bonaire (Klein Bonaire) and the Aves

120 At the end of the West Indies Company in 1791, the debts and assets were acquired by the State. There was a Direction *ad interim* of the West Indies Colonies (1791-1792) and of the Council of the Colonies in the West Indies (1792-1795). The Council of Colonies is set as administrator of the current affairs of the WIC until 1795. Cfr. Den Heijer, H. (1994). *De geschiedenis van de WIC.* Zutphen:Walburg Pers.

121 Cf. Oostindie, G. (2000). We will be dealing with the different bodies of the government in the next chapters.

and Roques islands. Those colonies were also known as *Colonie Curaçao en onderhoorigheden*, that is, the Colony Curaçao and Dependencies.[122] In the Constitution of 1922 the name of the colonies was changed to "the Dutch Indies, Suriname and Curaçao".[123]

Curaçao was placed under the authority of the *Kamer van Amsterdam*[126], while St. Maarten together with Saba and St. Eustatius was governed by the *Kamer van Zeeland*[127].

Cultural Aspects

RELIGION

Education and religious education are important aspects in every culture. Already in 1636, the WIC asked the director of Curaçao to do everything possible to redeem the 'blind Indians' of their barbaric manners and to make them civilized people. In the instruction of 1638, which was given to the pastors[128] going to the islands, it was mentioned that the presiders should do everything they could to educate the Portuguese, Spanish and their children as well as the Negros and Indians in Christianity. Most of these missionaries were from the Dutch Reformed Church. Regardless of this instruction, there were not many Indians and black slaves baptized into the Dutch Reformed Church. According to the Reformed Church, unbelievers – which included the Catholic Spanish and Portuguese – could only be baptized after being educated in the Christian faith. The pastors did not have the time to do this; furthermore, they did not bother to learn how to speak the language of the Indians and the slaves. The theology of the Dutch Reformed Church at the time placed a strong emphasis on the doctrine of election or predestination and the bonding of the free will. According to them, if the Indians and slaves were not Christians or in a subservient position, then, it must be "God's will." There was nothing more for them to do and it

122 Oostindie, G. (2002). Een antwoord op de Curaçaose exodus?, in *Justitiële verkenningen* (28: 1), pp. 9-20.

123 Klinkers, I. (2003). *Decolonising The Caribbean: Dutch Policies in a Comparative Perspective*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, p. 61.

126 Chamber of Amsterdam.

127 Chamber of Zeeland.

128 These pastors were probably Dutch Reformed and the Portuguese and Spanish were considered to be Catholic and non-Christian.

allowed the more elitist Protestant group to justify being separated from the slaves. The ethnic demarcation between blacks and whites was deliberately used as a social and religious division. This division was the strongest on Curaçao, but it also existed on the other islands.[129]

Most of the Dutch colonizers in the Leeward Islands were Protestant, but they never really stimulated the conversion of the colored inhabitants to their religion. It was the Catholics, who were more intent on converting the locals.

The situation was different on the Windward Islands. Large parts of the inhabitants became members of the Methodist church, which was active in the adjoining British Islands. Currently, the Methodists still have a presence in St. Maarten and St. Eustatius. In Saba, the Anglican Church was more dominant.

The Catholic, Methodist, and Dutch Reformed churches became active social players in the Windward Islands during the 19th Century. They managed to forge a place for themselves in the Islands' life by offering education, medical care and services to the islanders. They also devoted themselves to improving the social circumstances of the slaves. The relation between education and religion will be dealt with in chapter 4.

LANGUAGE

Although Dutch is the official language in the Netherlands Antilles, in the Windward Islands, the lingua franca is English and in the Leeward Islands it is Papiamento.[130] The current discussion on the language issue is dealt with in chapter 4.[131]

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129 Cfr. Dalhuizen, L., Donk, R., Hoefte, R. & Steegh, F. (eds.) (1997)., *Geschiedenis van de Antillen: Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Sint Eustatius, St. Maarten.* Zutphen: Uitgeversmaatschappij Walburg Pers, pp.113-115. See also Hart, J. (1992). *150 jaar Rooms Katholiek Onderwijs op de Nederlandse Antillen: Een gedenkboek ter herinnering aan de komst der Zusters 150 jaar geleden op de Nederlandse Antillen.* Scherpenheuvel: Drukkerij Imprenta.

130 Papiamento was developed in the 17th Century by the Portuguese-speaking Jews and the Dutch speaking population.

131 Currently, the government of the Netherlands Antilles declared Papiamento and English as official languages together with Dutch. The federal government chooses in favor of the primary language and not the official one. Thus, Papiamento became the language of instruction on the Leeward Islands, English on the

Language acquires special significance, when it is viewed together with education, especially when one considers the fact that there is a mismatch between the official and the primary language of the islands.

Economic structure of the Netherlands Antilles

A GENERAL OVERVIEW

The Antillean economy is an open and one-sided structure. Being open, it is aimed at foreign countries; this is especially true for the oil-industry, the hotel and restaurant trade and off-shore companies. Both Antillean oil refineries, namely, Shell in Curaçao and Lago in Aruba, export approximately 98% of their production. The hotel and restaurant industries rely exclusively on foreign tourists, mostly North Americans. However, being a one-sided structure, the Antillean economy lacks diversification. Should the oil and tourism industries fail, the entire financial edifice would collapse.

The lack of raw materials is a great natural obstacle for the economic development of the Netherlands Antilles. On top of that, the soil conditions (and the yearly hurricanes in the Windward Islands) hinder the development of any significant agriculture and farming production. Consequently, the islands depend on imports, ranging from vegetables to drinking water. The high dependency factor explains why the cost of living in the Dutch Antilles, compared to the other islands in the region, is so high.[132]

The insular nature of the Netherlands Antilles is an important variable that explains the difficulties experienced by the Dutch Antillean economy. The overseas transport capacity of the islands is not well developed. Each of the six islands has its own harbor and

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Windward Islands, while Dutch was relegated to a subject within the curriculum. In fact, Dutch is seen as a second language on the Leeward Island and a foreign language on the Windward Islands. The language issue will be looked at in chapter 4. See Morrissey, M. (1986). Schooling in St. Maarten and Saba: English replacing Dutch as language of instruction, in *Caribbean Journal of Education,* (13: 3), pp. 220-224; and Watson-Richardson, J. (1996). Language in decision: What language policy offers the majority of children the best chances of success on St. Maarten, in Caribbean Studies Association. Puerto Rico, pp. 1-23.

132 Cfr. Gowricharn, R. (ed.) (2006). *Caribbean Transnationalism: Migration, Pluralization, and Social Cohesion.* Oxford: Lexington Books; See also Furtado, C. (1990). *Economic Development of Latin America: Historical Background & Contemporary Problems.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

there are three international airports.[133] All of them have their own electricity company or more. Nevertheless, maintaining and developing the necessary infrastructure is a great burden for the economy of each island, in particular, for the Netherlands Antilles in general.[134]

At the beginning of the 20th Century, the political stability of Venezuela and the location of the Islands favored the establishment of oil refineries in Curaçao (1918) and Aruba (1929). These factors gave rise to a prosperous mono-industrial economy. This bonanza created enormous job opportunities, which stimulated immigration. However, due to the lack of trained workers, the needed staff and personnel had to be recruited elsewhere, including from the Windward Islands and Bonaire. Currently, the main reason to migrate from any of the other Dutch Antillean islands to Curaçao and Aruba is to study at the "University of the Netherlands Antilles" (UNA)[135], which is in Curaçao, or at the "University of Aruba,"[136] in Aruba.

TOURISM

At the end of 1960 and the beginning of 1970, the arrival of foreigners increased considerably. Tourism became a valuable source of job creation and income. However, the salaries in the hotel sector have never been as high as in the oil refinery sector.

The government facilitated the building of hotels, granting tax incentives to stimulate growth in the tourism sector. It promoted the introduction of casinos and the creation of tourist routes and artificial beaches. However, these measures were not

133 The international airports in the Netherlands Antilles are: "Flamingo" (BON) in Bonaire, "Hato" (CUR) in Curaçao, and "Princess Juliana" (SXM) in St. Maarten. The other two islands have minor airports, Sint Eustatius has "Franklin Delano Roosevelt" (EUX) and Saba has "Juancho Yrausquin" (SAB). Aruba, too, has an international airport called "Reina Beatrix" (AUA), which has the advantage of having an in-built American custom service.

134 Some information regarding the economy: currency Florin (ANG) = 100 cents; Rate of exchange 1 Euro = 1.8 Florinn (ANG); GNP (Gross National Product) 2005 = 2.58 billion dollars; GNP per capita 2005 = 13552 dollars.

135 Established on 12 January 1979.

136 Established in 1988.

accompanied by a commitment to the education of the personnel meant to render the services.[137] Furthermore, in the case of St. Maarten, the tourist industry has developed faster than the infrastructure. The most attractive assets of the Island are in the duty-free zone, where visitors are offered the possibility to make day trips to the neighboring islands, e.g. Saba, St. Eustatius, and Anguilla.

There are two kinds of tourists in the Netherlands Antilles: the residing tourists (who remain longer than 24 hours) and the cruise tourists (who come and go on the same day).

Tourism in the Netherlands Antilles has always been strongly dominated by the American tourist. In the last years, Venezuela has become one of the main sources of tourists arriving in Curaçao (and Aruba). Bonaire has also seen the arrival of many mainland Dutch citizens, who also buy local property.[138]

OTHER FACTORS

The bank and monetary system also create many jobs in the Netherlands Antilles. This is due to the intensive trade traffic and the growing number of foreign investors, the so-called offshore companies.

Trade also takes an important place in the country's economy. Trade benefits both the locals and the tourists. The transit trade is stimulated by the duty-free zone facilities.[139]

137 It was only in 1982 that Aruba saw the establishment of a hotel school granting an associate degree, which could lead to further studies in the USA.

138 See: Van Rens, J. (1971). Het Economisch Toeristisch Administratief Onderwijs, in *Pedagogisch Forum,* (5: 9), pp 339-342 & Sypkens Smit, M. (1995). *Beyond the tourist trap: A study of Sint Maarten culture,* Amsterdam: Natuurwetenschappelijke Studiekring voor het Caraïbisch Gebied.

139 See: Thompson, A. (1997). *The Haunting Past. Politics, Economics and Race in Caribbean life*, Kingston, /Oxford, GB: Ian Randle Publishers; Verhoeven, J. (2001). Korte situatieschets: Nederland, de Nederlandse Antillen en Aruba, in *Conferentiebundel: De economische ontwikkeling van de Caribische landen en gebieden overzee (LGO): de rol van de moederlanden,* Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaites, pp 31-39.

CONCLUSION

The Netherlands Antilles has a remarkable history in the Caribbean. The colonial context shows that the different islands with their unique story became special places where the people own unique identity and culture have prevailed. The language issue, which has been and still is a much debated topic, demands more research and reflection.

After providing a context to understand the Netherlands Antilles, this material forms the basis of understanding the context and development of the island St. Maarten and the Charter of 1954 in the next chapter.

ST. MARTIN

INTRODUCTION

St. Martin[140] is an island of only 37 square miles, divided into two different political entities. The Southern part is Dutch, called St. Maarten; the Northern part is French, called Saint Martin. It is located 150 miles south east of Puerto Rico, 18 degrees north and 63 degrees west. It is the smallest landmass in the world that is shared by two separate governments. Despite the confusion for outsiders, islanders understand that this tiny island's governmental authority is divided in many other ways.

Both St. Maarten and Saint Martin have parliamentary forms of government. Each respective system joins other Caribbean islands in a governmental body connected to either the Netherlands or to France. The Dutch Windward Islands have never been of any real importance for The Hague. In fact, it has been said that "The islands were miniscule in comparison with Dutch possessions elsewhere around the world. The islands had no history of any importance, or native populations in any numbers, while most of the inhabitants were a few Anglophile Dutchmen and English pirates."[141]

The capital of Dutch St. Maarten is Philipsburg. The main natural resource of this

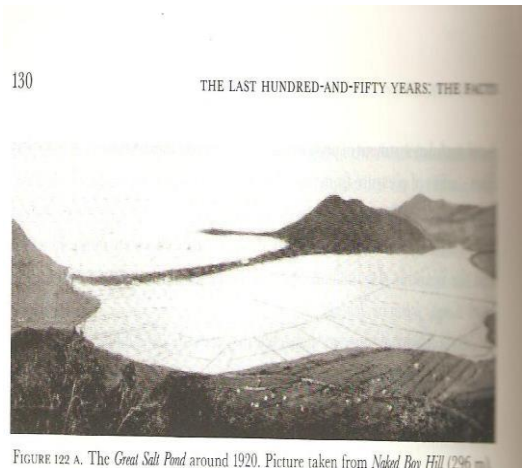

FIGURE 122 A. The *Great Salt Pond* around 1920. Picture taken from *Naked Boy Hill* (196

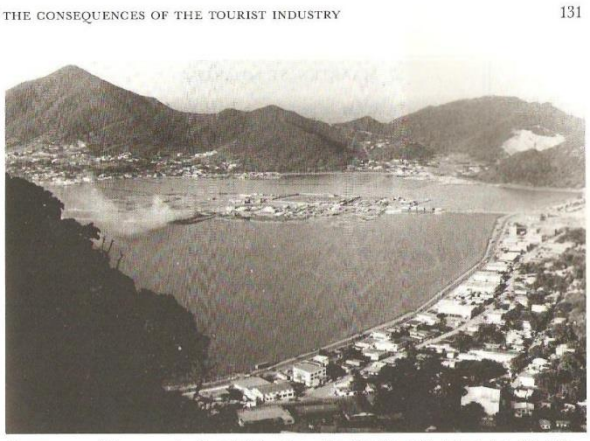

FIGURE 123 A. View over the *Great Salt Pond* from *Fort Hill*. The hill at the left is *Naked Boy*.

140 When dealing with the whole island, Dutch and French side, St. Maarten and Saint Martin, this name will be used.

141 Johnson, W. (1995). The history of the Windward Islands, in *Stichting ABC Advies.* Berlicum, p. 4.

island was salt, which is why it was called *Sualiga* (Salt Lands or Salt Pond) by the Amerindians.[142]

Although English is spoken everywhere, Dutch is the official language of St. Maarten, and French of Saint Martin. There are 37 white sandy beaches all over the island. Even though US dollars are widely accepted on both sides of the island, on the Dutch side, the official currency is the Florin or Guilder (NAF) and on the French side the Euro. The Euro took the place of the now obsolete French Franc (FF).

There are 80 different nationalities, who reside on the island. This shows the importance of migration for the island. The island's past helps one to better understand the many influences that have shaped the local community.

GENERAL HISTORY OF ST. MAARTEN

Christopher Columbus allegedly spotted the island on his way to Hispanola on November 11, 1493. Carib Indians143 had attacked settlers in the southern Caribbean islands and Columbus was concerned with the safety of his people at Fort Navidad on the present-day Dominican Republic. He sped toward the settlement and passed by St. Maarten / Saint Martin without exploring it. He named it after the Bishop of Tours and patron saint of France, St. Martin (316-397 CE).[144]

At the beginning of August of 1631, the first Dutch settlers arrived on St. Maarten, thus, becoming the first Dutch colony in the Caribbean region.[145] In 1638, the Spanish chased the other European settlers away and the conquerors took over the Dutch-constructed Fort Amsterdam in Great Bay. Within 10 years, the soldiers abandoned the

142 Voges, M. (1992). *Sint Maarten, Saint Martin.*St. Maarten: Van Dorp St. Maarten N.V., pp. 11-14.

143 Today known under the name of Kalinago.

144 Hartog, J. (1981). *History of Sint Maarten and Saint Martin.* Sint. Maarten: The Sint Maarten Jaycees, p. 15 and p. 19.

145 Badejo, F. (1990). Sint Maarten: The Dutch half in future perspective, in Sedoc-Dahlberg, B. (ed.) (1990). *The Dutch Caribbean: Prospects for Democracy.* New York: Gordon and Breach, p. 119 & Hartog, J. (1981). *History of Sint Maarten and Saint Martin,* p. 72.

island and the Dutch and French landed from nearby St. Eustatius and St. Kitts respectively. After small skirmishes, the two European powers decided to divide the island rather than fight over who would control it.[146]

Popular folklore has it that the division of the island was decided by a competition between a Dutchman and a Frenchman. Starting at Oyster Pond, the two "competitors" stood back-to-back and then walked around the coastline of the island to decide the political boundaries. The Frenchman proceeded north with a flask of wine, while the Dutchman went south with a flask of Dutch gin. The Frenchman covered more ground, winning 21 square miles for France, while the Dutchman had a bit too much and won only 16 square miles for the Netherlands.[147]

In 1648, the Dutch and French signed a partition treaty for the movement of goods and services. Nevertheless, European wars caused the island to change hands many times. The English invaded from nearby Anguilla, while the Dutch and the French battled at least 16 times for total control of the island.[148]

From the 1750s, sugar plantations were developed. There were 35 to 37 of these on each side of the island. Labor was needed, so slaves were introduced from Africa. In 1848, slavery was abolished in the French Caribbean islands, including Saint Martin. On the Dutch side, however, slavery was only abolished in 1863, but after 1848, a slave only had to cross to the French side in order to gain freedom.[149] Without slave labor, the sugar industry ground to a stop. The last plantation closed in 1915. Hence, the economy of the island from the beginning of the 20th century to the mid-1950s was impoverished. The population managed to survive by raising cattle and fishing. Many local people went to Aruba, Curaçao and Venezuela to work in the oil refineries, or to Guadeloupe and Martinique to work on other sugar plantations. Others went to Puerto Rico, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and the Virgin Islands for work.

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146 Voges, M. (1992). *Sint Maarten, Saint Martin*, pp. 12-13.

147 Idem, p. 33.

148 Idem, p. 39.

149 Idem, p. 70.

According to Sypkens Smit, there were two waves of emigration from St. Maarten. The first wave (1860-1870) went to the cane fields on *St. Kitts*, the phosphate mines on the island of Sombrero or to Redonda, Connotable and French Guyana. Some people even left for the United States. At the end of the last century (ca. 1890), the second wave of emigrants left the island; this time, they left to cut cane on the Greater Antilles, especially the Dominican Republic.[150]

Today many St. Maarteners have parents who worked in other areas of the Caribbean in the first half of the 20th century. This helps to explain why some islanders embrace nationalist discourses about who is a true St. Maartener. This is probably a (subconscious) reaction to the experience of their parents, who migrated to other islands (e.g. Aruba), where they were not always fully accepted as full members of the community.

The construction of "Princess Juliana" International Airport (PJIA) in 1943 as an allied air base did more to help the future of St. Maarten / Saint Martin than any other event. In 1950, the Little Bay Resort was constructed near Philipsburg, which would become the source of an impressive amount of development on the Dutch side of the island over the next 35 years. The French side developed at a much slower pace, at least until 1985. The French law of "defiscalization" gave tax incentives for French citizens and businesses to invest on the islands of the French Caribbean, thus, making investments more profitable.

(Picture PJIA 1950 & 2006)

Only about 19 percent of the island's population is locally born. The profits from tourism have encouraged many, who left the island decades ago, to return. Today, most of the people who now call St. Maarten /Saint Martin "home" speak English, French, Spanish and Dutch and other regional dialects.[151]

150 Smit, S. (1995). *Beyond the tourist trap: A study of Sint Maarten culture*, p. 126.

151 Idem, p. 128.

The name used for the island shows some changes over time. According to Hartog,[152] the name appearing on the world map in 1500 was *San Martín*. Other references were found on an anonymous card in 1512, naming it the island of *S. Marta*, thereafter, in 1516, *Sam mtim.* Judging by the shape, it could well be the island. Also, the name of *Sa marti* can be found in the Portuguese atlas *Ricardiana*. It seems that the name *San Martín* is also found in Spanish literature, but in Dutch writings, this spelling is not recorded anywhere. Hartog contends that in a letter to the *Estates General*[153] in 1631 the word *St. Martin* was used, while in 1634, the word *St. Martijn* is mentioned. In 1631, the *Chamber of Sealand* alternatively used *St. Martin* and *St. Martyn*. However, in 1634, the name in use was *St. Martijn*. In 1655, the final name became *St. Maarten.* Hartog continues that Sint Martijn or Sint Martin were the names used by the Dutch until 1936. In 1936, thanks to the *Staatsregeling*[154] (*Publicatieblad*[155], No. 105), the name *St. Maarten* became the official name of the Dutch part of the island. This is also mentioned by Lynch: "Following 1936, more governmental changes occurred relative to the six-unit colony in general and St. Maarten in particular: St. Martin, the traditional name for the island, became Sint Maarten (Dutch spelling), to indicate the difference between the Dutch side of the island in the South and the French side in the North (spelled Saint-Martin)."[156]

In English, the whole island is called *Saint Martin*. In this study, for clarity, we will refer to Dutch Saint Martin by its Dutch name: *Sint Maarten or St. Maarten*, the reason being that the English spelling coincides with the name of the French side of the island.

152 Cfr. Hartog, J. (1964). *De Bovenwindse Eilanden*, pp. 23-24.

153 Comparable to Parliament

154 Constitution

155 Official Journal

156 Lynch, E. & J. (2007). *Know your political history*". St. Maarten: House of Nehesi Publishers, p. 4.

CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION OF ST. MAARTEN 1940 - 1954

Colonial Administration

In 1940, the administrative relations between the Netherlands and the Dutch Caribbean were still colonial, based on the 1865 "Regulation for the Dutch Indies". According to the Constitution of 1922, the "Regulation" gave great power to the local governors, who had been appointed by the Dutch. These powers overrode the local Councils – *De Staten*[157] - with decisive competences, since the Governor could administer the colony with instructions from the King. Those powers were reconfirmed in the 1936 "Regulations" and were even widened.[158]

For the Netherlands, the East Indies always seemed to be more important than the West Indies. In 1940, the Dutch colony of Indonesia had about seventy million inhabitants, while the Netherlands had only nine million. The Netherlands Antilles had only 108,000 inhabitants and Suriname 140,000 inhabitants. The Dutch wanted above everything to keep Indonesia as a colony, while Suriname and the other Kingdom159 partners waited patiently on the side-lines, eagerly waiting to obtain a different status.[160]

Dismantling the Dutch Empire

The period after World War II represented a setback for the colonial history of the Netherlands. First, since the Netherlands was occupied, it could hardly give guidance to its colonies in the West Indies. Second, after the War, in 1945, Indonesian nationalists declared

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157 The Estates. *De Staten* was in Curaçao. There were also local councils in the rest of the islands. Namely the Council of Police (*Raad van Politie*).

158 Hannum, H. (ed.) (1993). *Documents on Autonomy and Minor rights.* Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, & Cfr. Klinkers, I. (1999). *De weg naar het statuut: Het Nederlandse dekolonisatiebeleid in de Caraiben (1940-1954) in vergelijkend perspectief. The road to the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. A Comparative study of the Dutch Decolonization Policy in the Caribbean (1940-1954). Unpublished* Doctorate dissertation University of Utrecht, The Netherlands, p. 61.

159 The name Netherlands Antilles was introduced in 1948.

160 Platje, W. (2001). Dutch Dutch Sigint and the Conflict with Indonesia, in *Intelligence and National Security* (16: 1), pp. 285-312, p28.

their independence and a period of military and guerrilla war began.[161] In the end, the war left the Netherlands broken, "impoverished and insecure regarding its prospects".[162] As a consequence, many Dutch citizens emigrated to the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. After the war with Indonesia, the attitude of the Dutch towards the Caribbean colonies changed positively, especially after the formal independence of Indonesia in 1949. In the East Indies, only New Guinea remained under Dutch rule[163].

In 1942, a proposal regarding the future relations within the Kingdom was presented and named "Constitutional Reform in the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies". Another new impulse in favor of changing the colonial relationship was given on 6 December 1942 when Queen Wilhelmina spoke of "full partnership" and "internal autonomy" for the overseas territories. This meant a new future in which solidarity, rather than an imposed Dutch authority, would shape relations.[164] Many refer to this speech as a milestone in the Dutch decolonization policy, despite the fact that it was not relevant to Indonesia. The East Indies were seen as a crucial extension of the Kingdom and the Indonesian contribution to the economy of the Netherlands had been much needed. This source of capital was about to be lost and the Netherlands resented it.[165]

Relations between the Dutch Colonies: Horizontal Relationships

After the independence of Indonesia, the Dutch colonial possessions in the West continued to be dominated by the Dutch, under the new flag of "overseas territories".[166] At this point, the parties' ultimate goal was not independence, but autonomy. However, there was a general feeling that economic dependence could easily block the path to autonomy.

161 Cfr. Kahin, G. (2000). Sukarno's Proclamation of Indonesian Independence in *Indonesia* (69), pp. 1-4 & Ricklefs, M. (1981). *A History of modern Indonesia: C. 1300 to the present.* London: Macmillan, p. 198.

162 Klinker, I. (1999). *De weg naar het Statuut*, p. 64.

163 According to Jupp, J. (ed.) (2001). *The Australian people: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its people and Their Origin.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 258.

164 Klinker, I. (1999). *De weg naar het Statuut*, pp. 67-68.

165 Zanden, J. (1998). *The Economic History of the Netherlands, 1914-95: A Small Open Economy in the Long Twentieth Century, Contemporary Economic History of Europe*. New York: Routledge, p. 23.

166 Klinker, I. (1999). *De Weg naar het Statuut*, p. 65.

Suriname and the Antilles wanted to move faster towards this new goal, driving the Curaçao *Staten* [proto-parliament] to visit their Surinamese partners in 1946. They jointly requested that each country within the Kingdom should be allowed to take care of its own internal affairs, thus trying to expand on the 1936 regulations.[167] In 1947, a Surinamese and an Antillean representative were included into the Dutch Council of ministers. Autonomy became law in 1948. In 1947, discussions already began about a new Kingdom structure. The discussions did not officially include Indonesia, since they had already started their decolonization process.[168]

The Hague would have preferred to opt for a future 'Union' that would have included its colonies both in the East and the West.[169] In 1947 and 1948, there were two military interventions in Indonesia, which was called "a new colonial war". The policy failed and the Netherlands was forced to grant formal independence to Indonesia. The Hague had to transfer sovereignty to Indonesia, lest the Americans should withhold the promised Marshall Aid. The official transfer of sovereignty from the Dutch government to Indonesia happened on 27 November 1949.[170]

In 1948, The Netherlands, The Netherlands Antilles and Suriname met to discuss their future at the "Round Table Conference," namely, to lay the foundations for a new constitutional order within the Kingdom. The Netherlands had two important goals: firstly, to meet the expectations of the Surinamese and Antillean delegates and, secondly, to improve their image abroad, as they were perceived to be old-fashioned and colonial. The conference was intended to produce a constitution for a "United Kingdom," founded upon "freedom, equality and solidarity". After a rough draft was completed, it took approximately another year before the interim regulation was implemented in Suriname (1949) and later in the Netherlands Antilles (1951). Both Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles realized that this regulation was not based on a mutual agreement; neither did it represent equal

167 Sharpe, M. (2005). *Globalization and Migration: Post-Colonial Dutch Antillean and Aruban Immigrant Political Incorporation in the Netherlands in Dialectical Anthropology (*29: 3-4) pp. 291-314, p. 296.

168 Borman, C. (2005). *Het Statuut voor het Koninkrijk, druk 2*. Deventer: Kluwer B.V. Uitgeverij, p. 7.

169 Borman, C. (2005). P. 6 and Klinker, I. (1999). P. 71.

170 Klinker, I. (1999). P. 71.

relations, since decision-making was still in the hands of the Dutch Parliament.[171] This interim regulation was seen as a step towards self-government and was welcomed more in Suriname than in the Antilles, where there were tensions between Curaçao and Aruba about the distribution of the seat in *De Staten*. Aruba was unhappy with the distribution in the Staten as such that Curaçao has the majority of seats, while Curaçao deemed this new model to be a mere "shadow of autonomy".[172]

In 1950, the Dutch cabinet with the Surinamese and Antillean representatives worked together on a first version of a "Sketch for a Charter regulating the status of the Netherlands, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles within the Kingdom". In 1952, after several meetings, a definite text of the "Draft proposal for a Charter of the Kingdom" was agreed.

Time and again, the different dialogue partners, especially the Netherlands, tried to monopolize the discussions. They lost sight of the fact that their future relations needed to be based on trust. The partners needed to recognize each other as equals and that recognition had to be explicitly expressed in the Charter. One point of discussion was the wording of the "preamble". The right to self-determination could not be mentioned, even though that was the very ground upon which ties within the Kingdom were to be maintained. The basis had to be reviewed in order to acknowledge each other's right to self-determination. The feeling in the Netherlands was that Suriname and the Antilles did not have much value, since they were economically small, militarily irrelevant and culturally meaningless.[173]

The situation did not change until 1953. At another Round Table Conference it was suggested that the right to self-determination should be taken up in the preamble. However, this was not done in a completely honest way. The idea was that the countries were already exercising their rights by staying within the Kingdom (not by opting out of it),

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171 Cfr. Oberon*, N. (2007). Checks-and-balances in Caribische bestuurssystemen: Een evaluatie van Aruba, de Nederlandse Antillen, Barbados, Anguilla en Saint Martin.,* Amsterdam. A research done by request of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.

172 Cfr. Klinker, I. (1999). Pp. 71-78.

173 Idem, pp. 78-82.

"wishing to strengthen the mutual bonds within the Kingdom by virtue of the right to self-determination". Nonetheless, all three countries accepted it. It also allowed for a revision of the Preamble after mutual consultations had taken place. The text did not say, however, what types of changes could be made to the text.

In January 1954, the negotiations of the Charter proper started, but Aruba and Curaçao were in disagreement about Aruba's desire to sever its links with Curaçao.[174]

THE CHARTER OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

Terminus a quo: 1954

1954 was the year in which the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, or *Het Statuut*, was signed. It was meant to mark the cessation of the Dutch colonial period. Queen Juliana solemnly announced it on 15 December 1954 in the *Ridderzaal* (Knighting Hall). The anniversary of this event is remembered annually on 15 December, under the name of *Koninkrijksdag* (Kingdom Day).

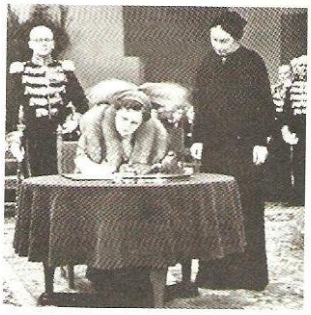
As stated, up to World War II, the Dutch did not show any profound interest in the Netherlands Antilles. Indonesia, in the East, and Suriname, in the West, were their main focus of attention. However, World War II changed this tacit *status quo*. In 1948, the Netherlands Antilles and Suriname introduced general voting rights and some began to speak of the internal autonomy of the territories of the Kingdom. In 1949, sovereignty was handed over to Indonesia and, thus, the Republic of Indonesia was born. In 1954, The *Statuut* was signed between the so-called Kingdom Partners (the Netherlands, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles) whereby they became autonomous.

The new order remained unchanged up to 1975, when Suriname became fully independent. The next change took place in 1986, when Aruba broke off from the Netherlands Antilles and requested *Status Aparte* within the Kingdom. It was then that the

174 Idem, pp. 83-84.

present contours175 of the Kingdom of the Netherlands were established: the union of the three autonomous countries: the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba.

Signing of the Charter or the Statute



Midden:
Ondertekening van het Statuut door Koningin Juliana, 15 december 1954

The *Statute* was prepared in two Round Table conferences, in 1948 and 1952-1954, respectively.[176] That was the first time that Suriname and the Antilles had to send delegates to the "motherland" in order to take care of their own affairs. For the first time, the Netherlands had to acknowledge them as full-fledged partners.[177] Dr. Moises Frumencio da Costa-Gomez is credited with having led the way for the signing of the 1954 Charter, which gave the Netherlands Antilles political autonomy within the Dutch Kingdom. The signing was done by Jonckheer.[178]

The Charter's Context

The Preamble starts with the following statement:

> "The Netherlands, the Dutch Antilles, noting that the Netherlands, Suriname and the Dutch Antilles in 1954 from free will have stated in the Kingdom of the Netherlands to accept a new legal order in which they defend their own interests independently and equivalent to the common interests and provide reciprocal assistance, and have decided upon in consultation the Statute for the Kingdom to adopt."[179]

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175 The constitutional stituation has changed since 2010.

176 Cfr. Oostindie, G. (2006). *Het paradijs overzee: De 'Nederlandse' Caraiben en Nederland,* Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij, p. 157.

177 Cfr. Oostindie, G. (2002). Een antwoord op de Curaçaose Exodus?, in *Justitiele* Verkenning, Nederlandse Antillen en Aruba (28:02), p.10.

178 Cfr. Oostindie, G. (2006). p. 157.

179 Statuut van 1954: Preambule: Nederland, de Nederlandse Antillen en Aruba; constaterende dat Nederland, Suriname en de Nederlandse Antillen in 1954 uit vrije wil hebben verklaard in het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden een nieuwe rechtsorde te aanvaarden, waarin zij de eigen belangen zelfstandig behartigen en op voet van gelijkwaardigheid de gemeenschappelijke belangen verzorgen en wederkerig bijstand verlenen, en

The Charter remains the highest legal arrangement for the Kingdom of the Netherlands as a whole,[180] above the Constitution and the Rulings of the member countries. It defines the Kingdom as a union of three autonomous partners, who are concerned with their own internal affairs.[181] In matters that regard nationality, defense, foreign affairs, the guarantee of the fundamental human rights and liberties, the respect of law and order and the establishment of a good administration, as they are all "kingdom affairs", will be administered by the royal government.[182] This in fact means the Netherlands.

Dutch New Guinea, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles had their own local administration in local matters. In theory, the affairs of the Kingdom were decided by mutual agreement. This status remained unresolved, even after the transfer of New Guinea to Indonesia.

Curaçao, which always had a special position in the colonial setting, continued to be a two-fold reality. Willemstad, its capital, became the capital of the Netherlands Antilles, where the Federal Government would be located. The fact that Curaçao is also the largest island, with the largest population, would establish its central position in the Antillean Parliament. Thus, federal affairs and local (Curaçao) island concerns were always going to be mixed, much to the mistrust and dislike of the other islands, especially St. Maarten and of course Aruba until 1986. After 1986 St. Maarten took over the role of Aruba in the Staten. The geographical distance between the Leeward and Windward Islands, and the

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hebben besloten in gemeen overleg het Statuut voor het Koninkrijk vast te stellen; constaterende dat de statutaire band met Suriname is beëindigd met ingang van 25 november 1975 door wijziging van het Statuut bij rijkswet van 22 november 1975, Stb. 617, PbNA 233; overwegende dat Aruba uit vrije wil heeft verklaard deze rechtsorde als land te aanvaarden; hebben besloten in gemeen overleg het Statuut voor het Koninkrijk als volgt nader vast te stellen.

180 The Netherlands is also affected by European Law, since it belongs to the European Union. This is not the case for either the Netherlands Antilles or Aruba, which are not part of the European Union (unlike their French Caribbean counterparts that are, since they constitute one country together with mainland France).

181 Cfr. Helsdingen Van, W. (1957). *Het Statuut voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden.* 's-Gravenhage: Staatsdrukkerij- en Uitgeverijbedrij, p. 189.

182 Cf. Oostindie, G. (2006). P. 158.

concomitant environmental and linguistic differences, would always play a role in the sometimes difficult internal relationships between the members of the Netherlands Antilles.

By virtue of the *Statuut*, education fell within the jurisdiction of each autonomous Kingdom partner, i.e. territory. For the Netherlands Antilles, this meant that the educational agenda would be planned, executed, and evaluated from Willemstad in Curaçao.

The principles of the Charter are: one Dutch nationality for all residents of the kingdom; one head of state (the legal successors of Queen Juliana); a common foreign policy and a joint military defense. Cooperation in more areas was and is possible, but each country of the Kingdom is to a large extent autonomous with regards to internal affairs. This also implied that all Dutch nationals of Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles had free access to the Netherlands, but the reverse could be a bit different.[183]

CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION OF ST. MAARTEN AFTER 1954

The political structure of the Netherlands is defined as a unitary system. St. Maarten's constitutional position *ad extra* is established in the Charter of 1954, but its status *ad intra* is ruled by the *Staatsregeling* or "State Ruling" of the Netherlands Antilles, which was published in 1955 and subject to subsequent amendments.[184]

Governmental changes implemented after 1936 resulted in the situation that St. Martin, the traditional name for the island, became St. Maarten (Dutch spelling), to indicate the difference between the Dutch side of the island in the South and the French side in the North (spelled Saint-Martin). The term "colony" was no longer used. The governor appointed the president of parliament (1954) as well as the attorney general and the head

183 Lakeman, P. (1999). B*innen zonder kloppen: Nederlandse immigratiepolitiek en de economische gevolgen.* Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Meulenhof, p. 13; and Hogervorst, L. (2004). *Van Etnocentrisme naar Cultuurrelativisme?: Over de historische beeldvorming van het Nederlands koloniaal verleden in de geschiedenisboekjes voor het lager- en basisonderwijs in de periode 1945 – 2000.* Unpublished thesis Faculteit der Historische en Kunstwetenschappen van de Erasmus Universiteit te Rotterdam, The Netherlands, p. 86.

184 Lynch, E. & J. (2007). *Know your Political History,* p. 3.

of finance. Parliament began hearing concept laws or draft legislation and general matters of governing (1954).[185]

The Legislative Council

The 22-member Legislative Council of the Netherlands Antilles was established in 1948. The Legislative Council, or *Staten*, is usually also called "Parliament". The first time the members were elected to this body was in 1948. The Staten or Parliament makes the general laws that govern the whole federal territory of the Netherlands Antilles. The "Interim Regulation" of 1950 meant that they obtained ministerial responsibility. Ministers became responsible to parliament, which exercises legislative power with the Governor. The Governor also had the power to dissolve the Governing body he represented and to convoke new elections; he is subordinate to the Crown.[186] Other changes were instituted after 1955: In 1973, the legal voting age was lowered from 21 to 18. In 1983, the territory of the Windward Islands was split into the "Island Territories" of Saba, St. Eustatius and St Maarten.[187]

The Council of Ministers

The members of the government of the Netherlands Antilles are the Governor and the Council of Ministers; together they form the "Cabinet". The Governor represents the Monarch in whom the executive power is vested according to articles 11 and 12 of the Constitution.

According to Article 37 (1) of the Constitution, this Council should have no more than seven ministers, unless otherwise provided for by federal ordinance. The chairperson of the Council of Ministers is elected by the ministers and called "the Prime Minister." But when the Governor attends a Cabinet meeting, "he shall act as Chairman and has an advisory vote." The political parties that form the government following a parliamentary election usually designate the leader of the largest party (with the most votes) as Prime Minister.[188]

185 Idem, p. 4.

186 Cfr. Klinkers, I. (1999). Pp. 115-117.

187 Lynch, E. & J. (2007). *P*. 4.

188 Cfr. Idem, p. 5.

The Island Territory

The Island Territory is governed by an island government of the Netherlands Antilles. This is stipulated in the *Eilandenregeling Nederlandse Antillen*[189] (ERNA, 1951). The ERNA regulates "the organization of the administration of the island territory" (Article 91(4) of the Constitution).

The branch of government that makes the laws governing the polity's internal affairs is the "Island Council". The Island Council of St. Maarten has 11-members; every four years, the legislature's members are elected by the territory's voters.

The daily management of the government is headed by the Executive Council, which is chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, who resides on the island. The Lieutenant Governor is the Dutch Crown's appointee and representative in the island territory and the representative of the Federal Government. The Island Council majority appoints the Executive Council members. At least half of the Executive Council members, called deputies or commissioners, must come from among the Island Councilors. The Island Council majority may select commissioners from outside the Council, but this seldom happens. The Council majority is determined by which political party or parties --in the event of a coalition government – have obtained the most votes during the Island Council election.

The Lieutenant Governor is also the chairperson of the Island Council and the Chief of Police. The Lieutenant Governor has voting rights in the Executive Council and an advisory vote in the Island Council.[191]

FIFTY YEARS LATER: 1954 - 2004

Since the signing of the Charter over fifty years ago, there have been many changes. It is difficult to describe how the Charter was received and what the implications were for each of the partners, because each party's perspective on the events were different. However, extensive literature and various studies have been produced on the topics that reflect on the past fifty years.

189 Islands Regulations of the Netherlands Antilles

191 Cfr. Lynch, E. & J. (2007), p. 6.

In 2004, a conference and workshops were organized by the University of Saint Martin and held in St. Maarten. The proceedings of the conference were published under the telling title: *The Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Caribbean: 1954-2004 What Next?*[192] The questioning of the existence of the Kingdom reflects the prevailing mood over the last fifty years in which the Charter was supposed to play a great role.

AN ASSESSMENT

Hirsch Ballin states that the 50th anniversary of the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands represents a critical moment. The primary aim of the Charter was to maximize the autonomy of the Netherlands Antilles and Suriname, which received its independence in 1975. The author argues that the Charter exhibits traces of the autonomy it grants to the overseas territories. This, coupled with the decision to link the three countries in an enduring confederation, appears to be a giant leap towards independence, indicating that separatism was not necessarily the overriding force. With the Charter, the definition of relations within the Kingdom was expanded beyond the narrow context of the Kingdom.

Lammert de Jong takes another point of departure and asks whether the not-so-united Kingdom of the Netherlands can still be repaired. He also looks at what should be taken into account at this stage and argues that any reparatory option will require more unity in policy, an expansion of the good governance agenda, more regulation and power sharing, goodwill and practical minds on both sides.[193]

In "the Kingdom Charter fifty years in the wilderness," Denicio Brison provides his opinion of the Charter. He approaches the Kingdom relations from a socio-historical perspective and insists that the aimless wanderings will persist, unless there are some desired constitutional and mentality changes, or even unless some creative violence takes

192 De Jong, L. & Boersema, D. (*eds.*) (2005). *The Kingdom of The Netherlands in the Caribbean: 1954-2004. What Next?* Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publisher. See also Cfr. George, M. (2005). Book review of De Jong, L. & Boersema, D. (*eds.*) (2005). *The Kingdom of The Netherlands in the Caribbean: 1954-2004. What Next?*, in *Society for Caribbean Studies* (54), pp. *32-33.*.

193 De Jong, L. (2005). Repairing a not so United Kingdom. Can it be done?, in De Jong, L. & Boersema, D. (*eds.*) (2005), pp. 15-34.

place to really catch The Netherlands's attention. For St. Maarten, such violence may be largely symbolic, restricted to some unilateralism (e.g. establishing its own currency or taking over the police force).[194]

Guadeloupe argues that the people of St. Maarten want change: to gain a separate status (*status aparte*) within the Kingdom. The success or failure in reaching this goal will depend upon how engaged the representatives are with the politics of autochthony and economic globalization. Two indigenous concepts should be taken into account: (1) the monetary system (i.e. the ultimate ground of most relationships on the Island is a quest for more money or power) and (2) Christianity understood as a meta-language (i.e. the manner in which St. Maarteners are encouraged to live up to the Christian principles of solidarity and equality). Many intellectuals reduce the flow of life to a set of hegemonic variables upon which they make equations and then state that "the facts do not lie". Dependent countries should also understand that the world today is forging a new international order that transcends nationality and ethnicity.[195]

In reference to the Charter, Croes says that the Charter is a LAT ("living apart together") relationship. He questions whether there is a real need, on the part of the Netherlands, to continue to take care of the common goods on equal grounds. The perception that most Dutch do not want to sever their ties with the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba must take the reality into account that more than half of the population of Curaçao resides in the Netherlands. There is a need to reinvent the Kingdom, and realize that the Kingdom could be a strategic partnership.[196]

Boersema suggests that the terms used in the Charter do not always find adequate equivalents in the present socio-political reality. Furthermore, the past still influences present thinking about colonialism and power relationships. Nonetheless, the past fifty

194 Brison, D. (2005). The Kingdom's Charter (Het Statuut); Fifty years in the wilderness, in De Jong, L. & Boersema, D. (eds.) (2005), pp. 35-44.

195 Guadeloupe, F. (2005). The Politics of Autochthony and Economic Globalization: seamy sides of the same coin, in De Jong, L. & Boersema, D. (eds.) (2005), pp. 45-61.

196 Croes, M. (2005). The 'reinvention' van het Koninkrijk,in De Jong, L. & Boersema, D. (eds.) (2005), pp. 65-80.

years have been one of cohabitation and contact on different levels, such as education, healthcare and culture.[197]

Steven Hillebrink speaks of "constitutional in-betweenity" in the reformation process of the Kingdom, where integration with the Netherlands seems appropriate and the population of the territory is incorporated into the population of the mother country, leading to equal rights and legal status for the overseas population.[198]

Dirk Kruijt & Wim Hoogbergen focus on the independence of Suriname in 1975, pointing out that the Netherlands never really bothered with Suriname. At that time what was needed with Suriname was the acquisition of an equal social, political and juridical status as well as fairer ties with the mother land within the Kingdom (rather than full independence). In other words, the warrant of integral citizenship for all was needed. The history of Suriname ought to be a lesson for the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba so that at this juncture they make the best choice possible with a view to the future.[199]

QUESTIONS ARISING

As we have seen, St. Maarten is the result of the multifarious combination of peoples, languages, economies, nationalities and other variables that converged on a small island. "Creolization" is its trademark. Global mediascapes are transforming cultural imagination and national identities. The result is that a new type of creolization has become a generic element of cultural exchange.200 Even though the roots of its people lead to different parts of the world, St. Maarten is not Amerindian, African, European, Indian, Chinese or North American, but mixed. Constitutionally, St. Maarten is not a nation-state, although it inhabitants see themselves as a "nation".

197 Boersema, D. (2005). 50 jaar Statuut en verder, in De Jong, L. & Boersema, D. (eds.) (2005), pp. 81-100.

198 Hillebrink, S. (2005). Constitutional In-Betweenity: Reforming the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Caribbean, in De Jong, L. & Boersema, D. (eds.) (2005), pp. 101-112.

199 Kruijt, D. & Hoogbergen, W. (2005). Suriname 1954-2004. Kroniek van een illusie, in De Jong, L. & Boersema, D. (eds.) (2005), pp. 113-136.

200 Boomkens, R. (2009). The New Disorder of Creolization. In Oosterman, A. *Architecture of Hope (Archis),* (19), pp. 12-16, p. 12.

The Netherlands Antilles is a country, but the population of its island territories does not always consider each other as members of the same community. St. Maarten, as member of the Netherlands Antilles, is also a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which is larger than the country of the Netherlands.

The constitutional complexity surrounding St. Maarten reflects a long colonial past; it bears on its current identity and determines its future course. Given the identity of a community and its members is often fabricated, transmitted and reformed through education, the vicissitudes of St. Maarten's identity have consequently influenced its schools. That is why we shall now start to concentrate our attention on education as such. In the next chapter, we shall present the founding and further development of the Dutch Antillean educational system between 1816—1954 as juridical macro structure, with special reference to St. Maarten. This will form a framework for our treatment of the central topic of this study, namely, education in St. Maarten between 1954—2000.

PARTIAL CONCLUSION

The political system of St. Maarten changed with the Statute of 1954 coming into effect. The equality of the different partners created a new challenge. With autonomy in 1948 and the implementation of the Statute, a new impulse arose for a different system in the Antillean society in general and for St. Maarten in particular.

How was education viewed amidst these changes? Which policy developed along with the changes? The framework we have attempted to describe in this chapter has put St. Maarten and its politics into perspective. In the next chapter, we will look into the educational system and policy from the times of slavery up to the present as well as the issue of language.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY BETWEEN 1816 AND 1954

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we present an overview of how the educational system in the Netherlands Antilles was established preceding 1954. We take the interplay between governmental policy with respect to education and the response given to that policy by the initial education providers as our point of reference. Even though this study focuses on primary education in St. Maarten, in this chapter, Curaçao will also occupy center stage.

The information presented in this chapter is important in two respects. First, from a practical perspective, we see how governmental policy constituted the legal and juridical framework within which all educational agents had to work and interact. Second, from an analytical perspective, we see how governmental rules, regulations and guidelines provide us with a glimpse of the official view of education (or lack thereof).

THE PERIOD UNDER THE NEW WEST INDIA COMPANY (NWIC)

Up to 1816

Although the NWIC[201] was in charge of education in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they were hardly concerned with education. At that time, there were no general regulations for education. Furthermore, the NWIC felt that education should be a concern of the churches and their religious personnel.[202]

The first known form of education in was religious education.[203] In 1640, a church pastor settled on Curaçao assisted by a so-called "school master". There are few details

201 The (First) West India Company was dissolved in 1674. Its financial problems and debts caused its downfall. However, the demand for international commerce, especially for slaves, and the existence of the colonies set the scene for the creation of the Second or New West India Company in 1675.

202 Cfr. Faneyte, L. & Kleimoedig, R. (1982). *Nederlandse Antillen: beknopte achtergrondinformatie van Land en onderwijssysteem*, Department of Education, Curaçao, p. 22.

203 In chapter 2 we already gave some information about religion on the islands.

available about the institution of education at the time, but it is known that the school master was a so-called "jack of all trades". He was sent to implement the administrative instructions given by the NWIC. He had to become an all-round assistant, referred to as the Company School Master.[204]

Besides the Company School Master, some private teachers also settled on Curaçao. During the eighteenth century, educational matters were left to private initiatives, and there were many small schools. Private schools were established according to the faith denomination of the residents of the island. There were schools for Jews, Protestants and Roman-Catholics. Besides the private "faith-based" schools, there was also a public school, known as *landsschool* (state school). The competencies of the teachers at the time were mostly nonexistent. Oftentimes, the teachers were retired military, who had settled on the island.[205]

From an organizational point of view, we know that each school teacher had a small school made up of a room where individual lessons were given. As in the Netherlands, the parents of the students provided a salary for the teachers. Only children from wealthy families were sufficiently privileged to receive a home education. Since only boys were allowed to go to school, home schooling had the considerable advantage of providing girls with an education.[206]

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, there were about five institutions for primary education besides home schooling. Schools were also a source of income for workers in the lower social classes of society. [207]

School fees varied depending on what the student needed to learn. Students were charged different amounts per month depending on whether they learned how to read, write or count.

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204 Cfr. Dalhuizen, L., Donk, R., Hoefte, R. & Steegh, F. (eds.) (1997). *Geschiedenis van de Antillen: Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten.* Zutphen: Uitgeversmaatschappij Walburg Pers, p. 114.

205 Cfr. Amelunxen, C. (1980). *De geschiedenis van Curaçao*, in *Antilliaanse reeks* (5).

206 De Pool, J. (1935). Zo was Curaçao. Amsterdam: Emmering, p. 15.

207 Cfr. Faneyte, L. & Kleimoedig, R. (1982), p. 23.

At a certain time, the Company School Master faced much competition from private schools. In response, the director of the NWIC limited the attendance of private schools to four schools. Thereafter, anyone who wished to establish a school had to report to the director and avail himself of an "act of consent" ("*akte van consent*"). The act was issued by the director, once he had been convinced of the qualifications of the petitioner.[208]

It is undeniable that the different religious communities were the primary driving force behind "public" education at the time. If one was rich, one could opt for home schooling, but if not, one depended on the educational thrust of the churches (or synagogue). It would not be until 1816 that there was a real possibility to develop truly general, official educational facilities for all layers of society.

Now, we will deal with educational developments divided over four periods, between 1816 and the signing of the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1954, namely: 1) 1816—1884, 2) 1884—1907, 3) 1907—1935, and 4) from 1935—1954.

1816-1884

When Governor Kikkert took over from the English in 1816, he mentioned the poor educational conditions on Curaçao.[209] There were still people, who were starting schools only to make some money. They would rent rooms, but would do nothing to improve the interior of the school which was often in a very bad condition. Kikkert made sure that there were only four government primary schools. No more public schools were allowed to be established. Public education would now be the rule and special or 'particular' forms of education would be the exception.

A qualified teacher, sent from the Netherlands, had to implement the Education Act of 1806[210] and its regulations. Education had to be given in a classroom, blackboards were

208 Cfr. Faneyte, L; & Kleimoedig, R. (1982), p. 23.

209 He promulgated the first "algemene schoolreglement" on 29 November 1819, entitled: "Provisioneel Reglement op het schoolwezen te Curaçao". This document was in force until 1873. See "*Publicatieblad* (P.B.)" 1819, no. 28

210 The "Elementary Education Act" was introduced in the Netherlands in 1806. Later on, this Act became the foundation for the education legislation in the Netherlands Antilles. According to this Act, public education was the rule and private education was the exception. See: "*Country Report Netherlands Antilles: Background*

compulsory and the less fortunate were entitled to a free education. The language of instruction was to be the "Nederduitse".[211]

Van Paddenburgh, who was living in the Netherlands, was asked to come to the island as a teacher. On 8 February 1817, Van Paddenburgh asked the government to establish a Department in the colony that would be useful for the entire society "Department tot Nut in het Algemeen" Department of General Usefulness)[212]. The aim of this department was: "The promotion of piety and good morals, according to Christian principles, without interfering in religious and civil disputes"[213]. This had to be achieved through the better upbringing and education of the youth. The department was established shortly thereafter, however, the results were meager.[214]

In the same year, the local authorities opened a second state school under the leadership of P. Thoelen and under the supervision of a school commission.[215]

On January 1st 1820, the Provincial rules overseeing the schools on Curaçao (*Provinciaal Reglement op het schoolwezen te Curaçao*) were enforced. The most important articles of this document were the following:

> Art. 1: On that account there will be four state schools on the island: two of the first level and two of the second.

Report for the OECD Review of the Education System in the Netherlands Antilles", (2009), p. 20. See also Dodde, N.L. (1995). Een lange onderwijsweg, Dodde, N.L and Leune, J. (eds.), *Het Nederlandse schoolsysteem.* Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, pp. 73-99.

211 Cfr. Gunning, J. (1970). Historisch schets van het Antilliaans Onderwijs, in Prins, F.W. (1970). *Leerplan en Leidraad enz.* Zeist: Dijkstra's Uitgeverij N.V.

212 Department of Public Affairs.

213 "Bevordering van godsvrucht en goede zeden volgens christelijke beginselen, zonder zich te mengen in godsdienstige en burgerlijke geschillen" in Dahlhaus, G. (1917). *De chronologische ontwikkeling en de staat van het bijzonder onderwijs in de kolonie Curaçao: Aan de leden van de beide Kamers der Staten-Generaal*. Nijmegen, p. 9.

214 Hartog, J. (1961). *Curaçao: van kolonie tot autonomie.* Oranjestad: De Wit, p. 865.

215 See: Country Report Netherlands Antilles (2009), p. 21.

Art. 2: Each one of the necessary school teachers will possess the needed skills and competencies in the subject to be taught – the conduct of the youth and men is indisputably good / the youth and men are of indisputably good character

Art. 3: The existing 'particular' schools are still allowed for serious reasons. However, such schools may no longer be founded in the future without the permission of the Governor General after prior investigation of the school inspectors. Also, the number of 'particular' schools will never be higher than three.

Art. 14: The school inspectors may visit both state and special schools as often as they see fit. Teachers are obliged to receive the inspectors with due respect, be it together or separately, during their visit to and examination of their school. They must also cooperate with their investigation into the progress done by pupils or students or any other subject concerning the school. They must equally give proofs of their skills and competencies whenever so desired.[216]

Schools were divided into first and second class schools. The educational courses at the schools of the second rank, "*tweede rang*", offered the following educational courses: reading, writing and arithmetic. In the first rank schools, "*eerste rang*", lessons were also given in foreign languages, geography and history, depending on the teachers' competence. Besides classroom education and the obligatory use of blackboards, other changes were to follow. These changes especially concerned the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic.

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216 See Dahlhaus, G. (1917), p. 10.

Art. 1: Daar zullen vier landsscholen op het eiland zijn, namelijk twee van den eersten rang en twee van den tweeden rang

Art. 2: Elk der hiertoe nodige schoolmeesters of schoolonderwijzers zullen behooren te bezitten de noodige kunde en bekwaamheid in het vak van onderwijs de jeugd en mannen zijn van een onbesproken gedrag

Art. 3: De bestaande particuliere scholen worden om gewichtige reden voor als nog toegelaten; doch zullen in het toekomend geene zulke scholen mogen worden opgericht, dan met toestemming van de Gouverneur-Generaal, na onderzoek van de schoolopzieners. Ook zullen zoodanige particuliere scholen als dan nimmer het getal van drie te boven gaan.

Art. 14: Het staat den opzieners van het schoolwezen vrij, de lands-, en bijzondere scholen te bezoeken, zoo dikwijls zij zullen goedvinden en zullen de schoolonderwijzers verplicht zijn de opzieners, wanneer deze, hetzij in corpore, hetzij afzonderlijk hunne school bezoeken en examineeren, met behoorlijke achting te ontvangen, hun onderzoek wegens de gemaakte vorderingen den scholieren of ook andere voorwerpen, het schoolwezen betreffende, behoorlijk beantwoorden en op hun verlangen in allen deele mogelijke proeven hunner kunde en bekwaamheid te geven.

At this time, the teachers' income came from the revenues of the school fees. The school fees of the less fortunate, those who enjoyed free education, were subsidized by the government.

There were also four "taskmasters" or superintendents, who monitored school order. These were namely the Lutheran pastor, his counterpart from the Reformed Church, a counselor, and a Protestant businessman. At the time, there were no separate year or term divisions and subjects were not taught in a certain sequel or within a certain structure. In 1822, Aruba also received a Land School Master as well as its first public school with a total of thirty-one pupils.

Curaçao was the hub around which the information from the other islands regarding education converged; it was also a mirror of the general situation. On the whole, state schools did not do well. In 1833, a school of the first rank was closed and in 1844, a school of the second rank followed suit. Financial deficits played a role in the closing of these schools. Their closures meant that private schools could expand, which primarily benefited education of free children.[217]

The Enslaved and Education

During this period, the 7,000 enslaved on the islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao were excluded from education. Mgr. Niewindt, the Catholic bishop, became aware of the situation and described it as follows: "the slaves are lascivious and slow, but good-natured and could improve through education"[218]. His understanding of the social reality of the slaves was marked by the prejudices of the time: he envisaged them essentially as workforce and frowned upon their lack of Christian discipline. Mgr. Niewindt's aim was "to give those people education according to their social state and standing, which will enable

217 Römer-Kenepa, N. (1992). Onderwijs als veiligheidsklep: De rooms-katholieke kerk en het volksonderwijs op de Nederlandse Antillen 1824-1863 in Bouwdewijnse, B. (1992). *Kerkwandel & lekenhandel: de rooms-katholieke kerk.* Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, pp. 33-54, p. 37.

218 ("De slaven zijn wulpsch en traag, maar goed van aard en te verbeteren door opvoeding"). Dahlhaus, G. (1917), pg. 12; Römer-Kenepa, N. (1992), pp. 37-38.

them to better acquire the basic principles of their religion as well as their duties towards the government and their fellow human beings."[219]

As from 1824, the education of the masses was promoted by the Roman Catholic mission. In the beginning, the main objective of the mission was to give instruction to the slaves, to enable them to become acquainted with religion and their duties towards the authorities and their masters. Schooling was not really a priority, but Catechism was. This situation changed when the government gradually started to fund private education.[220]

Nonetheless, it must also be underlined that the clergyman was optimistic about the potential for learning of the students. His vision was colonial, but certainly not fatalistic.

Accordingly, in 1828, the prelate requested material aid from the local General Governor to hire people to teach the slaves on Curaçao and other islands how to read. He added that those classes could even be held at night after working hours and in the local language. Unfortunately, the request was rejected.

Mgr. Niewindt did not give up his idea. In November 1835, he turned to the Minister of Colonies in The Hague and called for effective education of slaves and poor children. Although his request yielded little results, change was initiated. On 12 January 1842, the first religious Franciscan sisters of Roosendaal would arrive on Curaçao. They established primary schools on Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire.[221]

Although the financial and economic situation of the colony was in a sad state, the Roman Catholic Church (mission) had some funds as well as cheap and qualified teachers (religious). Therefore, the church could do what the state could not, namely, improve the quality of education.

By 1845, two government schools and nine private schools with twenty-nine teachers were running. Moreover, thanks to the efforts of Mgr. Niewindt, both colored[222] as well as white girls could enjoy school education.

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219 Dahlhaus, G. (1917), p. 12.

220 See: Country Report Netherlands Antilles (2009), p. 20.

221 Cfr. Dalhuizen, L., Donk, R., Hoefte, R. & Steegh, F (eds.) (1997), p.115.

222 This word will be used to refer to blacks, mulattos, etc.

In June 1848, another regulation shaping the policies of the government for Curaçao and other islands came into force, namely, care for the slaves was emphasized and strongly recommended by the Colonial administration. Appropriate measures were planned to improve the material and moral condition of the slaves and to ensure that the manumissions are beneficial to the colonies.[223]

In July 1848, Mgr. Niewindt again asked the minister of Colonies to equip him with material support in order to bring religious and moral education to the slaves. He was told that some funds would be made available for this. In fact, this would never happen. The funds would not arrive until one hundred years later, in 1949. All the same, the vicarage received a portion of the funds that came from slaves, whose freedom had been purchased.

From 1855 onwards, Christian education would be available for the children of slaves. [224] At the same time, separate schools for boys and girls were instituted. Furthermore, in 1857, the Governor officially announced that slaves were obliged to follow religious or "other" education. The "other" education had to be neutral, under the supervision of the government. Shortly afterwards, the regulation of the Board was announced to prepare for the emancipation of the slaves. The owners of the slaves were obliged to allow slave children below the age of fourteen to have the opportunity to receive two hours of Christian education daily. This meant that not all slave children could enjoy schooling, since this rule depended upon the permission of the owner.[225]

The number of schools continued to grow. In 1858, there were twenty schools with 1,896 students, which meant that 34% of all children under the age of fourteen years enjoyed education.

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223 "de slaven blijven de zorg van het koloniaal bestuur met nadruk aanbevolen. Gepaste maatregelen worden beraamd, om den stoffelijken en zedelijken toestand der slaven te verbeteren en om de manumissiën te doen strekken tot nut der koloniën", Dahlhaus, G. (1924). *Monseigneur Martinus Joannes Niewindt eerste apostolisch vicaris van Curaçao : een levensschets, 27 aug. 1824 - 12 jan. 1860, opgedragen aan het Roomsch Katholieke volk van Curaçao*. Curaçao, p. 308.

224 Hartog, J. *De Bovenwindse Eilanden. Aruba*: De Wit N.V, p. 296.

225 Cfr. Piternella, W. (1977). *Opvoeding en Onderwijs aan slaven ten tijde van de Ned. West-Indische compagnie*. Universiteit van Amsterdam, pp. 14-17.

1886 was a memorable year, since it marked the arrival of the first "Brothers of Tilburg" on Curaçao. They started a boarding school for youth from neighboring countries, especially from Venezuela. Gradually, due to the lack of governmental political will and funds, the educational landscape in the Leeward Islands became strongly Catholic, especially in Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire, where the Catholic presence was greater.[226]

The colored people living outside the city could not get the necessary proper education for different reasons. First, education was not really meant for this group; furthermore, their parents did not want to send their children to school, since they were needed to work on the land to support their families. Also, due to their poverty, they could not buy the necessary clothing and shoes needed for the school. As seen on the following table, the ratio for the different colored pupils in the schools in the Leeward Islands outside the city and in the suburbs was very diverse:[227]

	whites	free colored	free blacks	slaves
City	2378	1747	1828	2293
Suburbs	403	493	2001	4442
Total	2781	2240	3829	6735

ENSLAVED AND EDUCATION ON THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES AND ST. MAARTEN

An application was made by the Catholic board on June 28, 1849 to establish a school for free education as well as for a paying boarding school to be run by the Dutch religious Sisters in St. Maarten. The school would make no religious distinctions. At the same time, a financial contribution was also requested for the maintenance of the teachers. The Governor replied that he would consult the St. Maarten authorities, but also recognized that

226 Cfr. Dalhuizen, L., Donk, R., Hoefte, R. & Steegh, F. (eds.) (1997), p. 117. One can wonder about this strong Catholic imbededness, given the strong influence in the Netherlands. Maybe the lack of "political will" has something to do with the Reformed/Calvinistic theology of the "bonded will". The idea was that if God did not "will" you to be a slaved or uneducated, you would not be born as one.

227 Römer-Kenepa, N. (1992), p. 38.

a school on St. Maarten was particularly necessary. The response by the Minister of Colonies was that a school on St. Maarten and St. Eustatius could not be given an allowance, because the number of slaves was very small and only a few of them were Catholic. The slaves were left unaided. Allowance for free poor children was equally impossible.[228]

On October 28, 1849, a letter was received from the Governor of Curaçao expressing the same opinion as the Minister. This meant that the government rejected the petition to establish a new school on St. Maarten on the grounds that "in due time the permission will be given to start a Roman Catholic school for children. Because the administration is convinced of the need for a teacher on Saint Martin, it wants to recommend their proposals to the Minister of Colonies."[229]

A letter from October 30, 1850 shows that the Bishop of Curaçao tried to incorporate the Xaviorian Brothers for his schools. This was due to the fact that besides Dutch and French, Spanish and English were also taught. The first Roman Catholic special school was established on May 15, 1851 with 134 children. While government regulations guaranteed equal rights for all religious confessions, this was more a *de iure* than a *de facto* reality. That is why the Bishop filed a complaint against the bias of the Governor and the administration in the Colony. He reminded them that the creation of a school on St. Maarten was refused because the population was predominantly Protestant. There were also other examples of pro-Protestant bias in governmental allocation of funding. On Aruba, a Protestant teacher was appointed for the amount of 900 guilders, despite the fact that the population was predominantly Catholic. A similar situation took place on Bonaire, where a Protestant teacher was appointed for 800 guilders to oversee 20 children. On Curaçao, where Protestants wanted to build a school for 75 children, a teacher would be paid 1,200 guilders.[230]

Next to the religious bias of the colonial government, there was also a racial one to be considered. On February 29, 1852, the Netherlands issued a new regulation for the educational policy of the government on Curaçao. Art. 89 states that "there should be given

228 Cfr. Bosch, G. (1985). *Reizen in West-Indie.,* Amsterdam: Emmering, p. 226.

229 Cfr. Dahlhaus, G. (1924), pp. 318-319.

230 Cfr. Dahlhaus, G. (1924), pp. 318-319.

public education wherever the numerous European population claims such action". This meant that the government had to prioritize the education of "Europeans" living in the Netherlands Antilles over the "local" free or enslaved populations.

In December 1862, a missive was sent to the Minister of Colonies regarding education. In it, there was no explicit mention of obligatory neutrality anymore. However, implicitly, the missive still seems to regard education as being neutral, since religious education was distinguished from school education.

Given that the existing educational provisions, as encapsulated in the Rules of 1819 (PB No. 28, and the supplement P.B. No. 270), were deemed outdated, and were no longer tenable as they were not in accordance with Arts. 178—181 of the Government Regulations, a new legislation about the regulation of education was announced on 15 January 1873. Finally, on 12 March 1873, the Regulation organizing education was published on Curaçao. Some of its articles are worth mentioning:

> Art. 3: The schools are divided into public and special schools. Subsidies may be granted to special schools on behalf of the Colony under such conditions as the Colonial Administration sees fit. Special schools, thus subsidized, are accessible for all children regardless of religious affiliation as are the public schools; Art. 19 is applicable thereto. Teachers should refrain from teaching, doing or allowing behavior which is contrary to the respect owed to the religious concepts of dissenters.
>
> The teaching of religion is left to the churches.
>
> Art. 15. On each one of the islands of the Colony, education is provided in schools and accessible to all children, insofar the resources permit it, regardless of their religious affiliation.

Special (private) schools were called 'special' because they are maintained by means of third parties, for education as such was considered neutral. We essentially took over education, as demanded by the Government per decree. If the resources of the Government did not permit it, we did it in lieu of the Government.[231]

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231 Cfr. Dahlhaus, G. (1917), pp. 40-42.

Art. 3 zegt: De scholen worden onderscheiden in openbare en bijzondere scholen. Aan bijzonder scholen kan vanwege de Kolononie subsidie worden verleend, onder zoodanige voorwaarden, als het Koloniaal Bestuur noodig acht. Bijzondere scholen, aldus gesubsidieerd, zijn gelijk de openbare scholen voor alle kinderen, zonder onderscheid van godsdienstige gezindheid toegankelijk en art. 19 is hierop van

Aº. 1893 Nº. 12.

PUBLICATIE-BLAD.

BESLUIT

tot wijziging van het Besluit "regelende de traktementen en toelagen van onderwijzers aan de Gouvernements-Scholen". (P. B. van 1884 No. 21).

IN NAAM DER KONINGIN!

DE GOUVERNEUR van Curaçao,

Overwegende, dat ter uitvoering van art. 38 van de verordening van 5 Juli 1884, Publicatie-blad No. 16, regelende het onderwijs in de kolonie Curaçao, het noodig is het navolgende vast te stellen.

Heeft, den Raad van Bestuur gehoord, besloten:

Art. 1.

Art. 1 van het Besluit "regelende de traktementen en toelagen van onderwijzers aan de Gouvernements-scholen (P. B. van 1884 No. 21)" wordt gelezen als volgt:

"De traktementen van het onderwijzend personeel aan de verschillende Gouvernementsscholen worden bij minimum en maximum vastgesteld als volgt:

a. voor de leeraars der school van Afdeeling I op f 1,800.— tot f 3,000.—

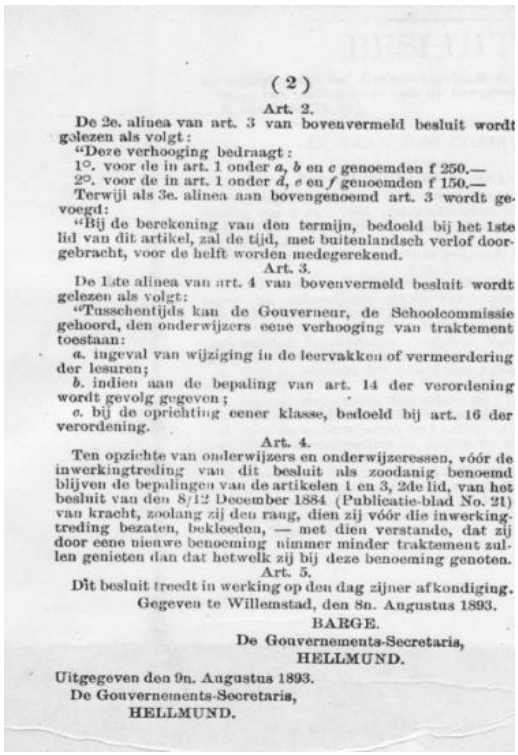
b. voor de leeraressen dier school op f 1,600.— tot f 2,600.—

c. voor den onderwijzer 2e. klasse op f 1,400.— tot f 2,200.—

d. voor de onderwijzeres op f 1,200.— tot f 2,000.—

e. voor den onderwijzer 3e. klasse en de hulponderwijzeres op f 800.— tot f 1,600.—

Wanneer een der in bovenstaande rubrieken bedoelde onderwijzers of onderwijzeressen aan het hoofd eener openbare inrichting van onderwijs wordt geplaatst, kan aan hem of haar eene toelage worden verleend tot een maximum van f 800.— 's jaars".



(2)

Art. 2.

De 2e. alinea van art. 3 van bovenvermeld besluit wordt gelezen als volgt:

"Deze verhooging bedraagt:

1°. voor de in art. 1 onder *a*, *b* en *c* genoemden f 250.—

2°. voor de in art. 1 onder *d*, *e* en *f* genoemden f 150.—

Terwijl als 3e. alinea aan bovengenoemd art. 3 wordt gevoegd:

"Bij de berekening van den termijn, bedoeld bij het 1ste lid van dit artikel, zal de tijd, met buitenlandsch verlof doorgebracht, voor de helft worden medegerekend.

Art. 3.

De 1ste alinea van art. 4 van bovenvermeld besluit wordt gelezen als volgt:

"Tusschentijds kan de Gouverneur, de Schoolcommissie gehoord, den onderwijzers eene verhooging van traktement toestaan:

a. ingeval van wijziging in de leervakken of vermeerdering der lesuren;

b. indien aan de bepaling van art. 14 der verordening wordt gevolg gegeven;

c. bij de oprichting eener klasse, bedoeld bij art. 16 der verordening.

Art. 4.

Ten opzichte van onderwijzers en onderwijzeressen, vóór de inwerkingtreding van dit besluit als zoodanig benoemd blijven de bepalingen van de artikelen 1 en 3, 2de lid, van het besluit van den 8/12 December 1884 (Publicatie-blad No. 21) van kracht, zoolang zij den rang, dien zij vóór die inwerkingtreding bezaten, bekleeden, — met dien verstande, dat zij door eene nieuwe benoeming nimmer minder traktement zullen genieten dan dat hetwelk zij bij deze benoeming genoten.

Art. 5.

Dit besluit treedt in werking op den dag zijner afkondiging.

Gegeven te Willemstad, den 8n. Augustus 1893.

BARGE.

De Gouvernements-Secretaris,
HELLMUND.

Uitgegeven den 9n. Augustus 1893.

De Gouvernements-Secretaris,
HELLMUND.

The school landscape was, therefore, made up of "public" (state-run) and "special" (Protestant or Catholic) schools. While the former were directly administered and financed by the colonial government, the latter were subsidized. It is worth noting that none of the schools were allowed to discriminate on religious grounds. In the Netherlands Antilles, schooling as such had to stay open to all, irrespective of the ideological background of the school.

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toepassing: de onderwijzer onthoudt zich van iets te leeren, te doen of te laten, wat strijdig is met den eerbied, verschuldigd aan de godsdienstige begrippen van andersdenkenden.

Het geven van onderwijs in den godsdienst wordt overgelaten aan de kerkgenootschappen.

Art. 15. Op elk der eilanden van de Kolonie wordt, zooveel de middelen gedoogen, onderwijs gegeven in de scholen, toegankelijk voor alle kinderen, zonder onderscheid van godsdienstige gezindheid.

De bijzondere scholen heeten dus "bijzondere", omdat zij door geld van particulieren werden onderhouden; want het onderwijs zelf was neutraal. We namen dus wezenlijk het onderwijs, door het Gouvernement bij verordening vereischt, over; of indien de middelen van het Gouvernement het niet gedoogden, deden wij het in plaats van het Gouvernement.

1884-1907

1882 marked a renewal in the colonial vision of education. The School Commission formed in that year gave some impulses to improve the low level of education. It became manifest that teachers were ill prepared.

On 12 July 1884, a new Regulation for education was issued. This Regulation incorporated Articles 3-19 and 26 of the Act of 1873. However, according to Dahlhaus, this Regulation seemed to have been made for an imaginary Curaçao. They wanted to have rich schools, with large numbers of teachers and teaching staff in all the sciences, but without religion. The salaries of public schools teachers were also regulated here. Among its new impulses, it can be mentioned that courses would be organized for teachers, whereas exams were to be taken based on preapproved programs. Other than that, it raised governmental demands of the school curriculum.[232]

The 1884 Regulation also created three kinds of education: free and simple education; paid primary education with English and Spanish being taught; paid education, to be compared with the previous General Secondary Education ("HBS")[233] in the Netherlands.

As part of the new thrust for education, a Catholic school for boys opened in Pietermaai, Willemstad, on 16 January 1885. Within a few days, 90 boys had signed up, mostly because they were assured that English would be a part of the curriculum. Within a few months that number had grown to 200.

Dahlhaus suggests that the vicariate was pushing towards Roman Catholic schools. The said Regulation structured education in the following way:

Primary education: reading, writing, arithmetic, principles of the Dutch language, principles of history, principles of morphology, religious instruction. Children from Spanish-speaking families were also taught the principles of the Spanish language.

Secondary education: reading, writing, arithmetic, English, Spanish, geography, history of the Netherlands and its colonies, sacred history, general history, morphology, gymnastics, singing, religion.

232 Cfr. Dahlhaus, G. (1917), pp. 44-46.

233 Hogere Burgerschool.

Higher education was the continuation and expansion of secondary education; besides the subjects of secondary education, the following subjects were also taught: 1) mandatory courses: English literature, English language, set and measurement art (stel- en meetkunst), physics, drawing. 2) Elective courses: French, Latin, experimental physics, accounting, music, philosophy.

Furthermore, Art. 13 also mentioned that the rules of courtesy were to be taught in order to stimulate the education and civilization amongst as many students as possible.[234]

On 1 January 1890, a new law came into force in the Netherlands whereby the right to special schools was recognized. In the final decision Minister Mackay emphasized that, there were also benefits for the public schools in the new legislation. Special education, which had previously been tolerated and regulated, was now properly recognized. Private schools that promoted the future of its pupils were to be legally considered as approved establishments, possessing the same right to government subsidies as governmental schools.[235]

For years, the allocation of funds for the Windward Islands had been scarce. In the past, priests had often paid lay people to teach, but that situation could no longer continue, because due to lack of finance. That is why Mgr. Niewindt made new efforts to find religious brothers and sisters to teach the youth. However, due to a lack of staff in the Netherlands and, primarily, because of financial needs, his plan could not be achieved. It was only on 3 May 1890 that the Dominican sisters arrived on St. Maarten. They would take the responsibility for all of the teaching on the three Windward Islands.[236]

In 1890, the public education system cost the colonial government some 54,000 guilders. Over the years, the allowance of the sisters' schools, with 2,092 pupils, was raised

234 Cfr. Dahlhaus, G. (1917), pp. 47-48. Also Dalhuizen, L., Donk, R., Hoefte, R. & Frans Steegh (eds.) (1997), pp. 117-118.

235 Cfr. Dahlhaus, G. (1917), p. 50.

236 Cfr. Hartog, J. (1964), pp. 505-507. For more information on the Domincan sisters, see: Voges, M. (1990). *De zusters Dominicanessen van Voorschoten: 100 jaar op St. Maarten, Nederlandse Antillen, 1890-1990,* Couraçao: De Couraçaosche Courant N.V.

to 5,600 guilders. St. Maarten was allotted an extra 400 guilders; with that, their subsidies reached 6,000 guilders.[237]

In the Ordinance of 1897, the three types of schools that had been established according to the 1884 division were replaced by a twofold system, namely: 1) free elementary education and 2) paid advanced education (MULO)[238]. Public schools were reduced in order to use the subsidy for the remaining schools. Private individuals again had permission to establish schools on their own account. Consequently, the amount of private schools increased, but the quality of education remained low. It was only in the twentieth century that primary education would start to flourish and that the number of primary schools increased, even against the will of the government. Following the example of Mgr. Niewindt, the Catholic mission had a role to play.239

In 1902, a new draft Regulation was issued concerning education in the colony of Curaçao as well as subsidies and special schools. Other issues were also treated, e.g. compulsory subjects, knowledge of nature, singing and drawing, as stipulated in the Act of 1884. The previous Regulation had been from 20 years earlier.

Some requirements for subsidies were enunciated. Schools had to teach in Dutch, there should be eighteen hours of teaching per week, accurate records of school attendance should be kept, and there should be a qualified teacher for every fifty children. Principals of schools with more than 200 children must be in possession of an *akte*[240] *als onderwijzer 2e klasse*. Apart from that, a controller was installed on the school board.

The next draft Regulation came out on 21 July 1905. Oddly enough, subsidies were reduced from 29,000 to 24,000 Guilders and the number of teachers decreased from 95 to 74. The debate about subsidies seemed to lean towards the opinion that special schools did

237 Cfr. Dahlhaus, G. (1917), p. 51.

238 Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs.

239 Cfr. Dahlhaus, G. (1917), p. 53. This applied to the wider region.

240 Certificate as second-level teacher.

not seem to maintain or develop their standards and had, therefore, to be replaced by public education. However, such a radical change would cost a lot of money.[241]

Once again, an attempt was made to take away the character of special education by trying to keep special education neutral, which could be interpreted as an opportunity to implement the principle of neutrality. This wish was granted and continued as a trend in the history of Dutch Antillean education. The vicarage had to follow the law and offer neutral education, meaning they had to maintain schools that were essentially equivalent to government schools. However, in the preliminary report on the budget of Curaçao, the Senate was forcefully against the principle of neutrality, and it was rejected by 6 to 4 votes.[242]

In the new Regulation of 6 September 1906, more changes were made in order to accommodate the wishes of the colonial Council. To safeguard the law, teachers, who had not passed exams, were given a diploma that established them as qualified 4th class teachers (*bekwaamheid 4e klasse*).[243] The salaries were also fixed. This Regulation came into force on 11 May 1907 (OJ 1907, No. 5.). At this time, the expression "elementary education" was removed and replaced with "lower (*lager*) education," which would eventually lead to the later G.L.O.-A and G.L.O.-B (*Gewoon Lagere School A en B*).[244]

1907-1935

The ordinance of 1907, wherein Dutch Antillean education was divided into primary and more expanded education (*meer uitgebreid onderwijs*)[245], stipulated that the following subjects had to be taught: reading, writing, arithmetic, principles of the Dutch language, principles of geography (especially about the colony of Curaçao and its surroundings), principles of the natural sciences, singing and drawing. For the girls, a useful handicraft was

241 Cfr. Faneyte, L. & Kleimoedig, R.(1982), p. 26.

242 Idem, p. 27.

243 Certificate of fourth-level competence.

244 Ordinary Elementary School A and B. Cfr. Prins, F. (1970).

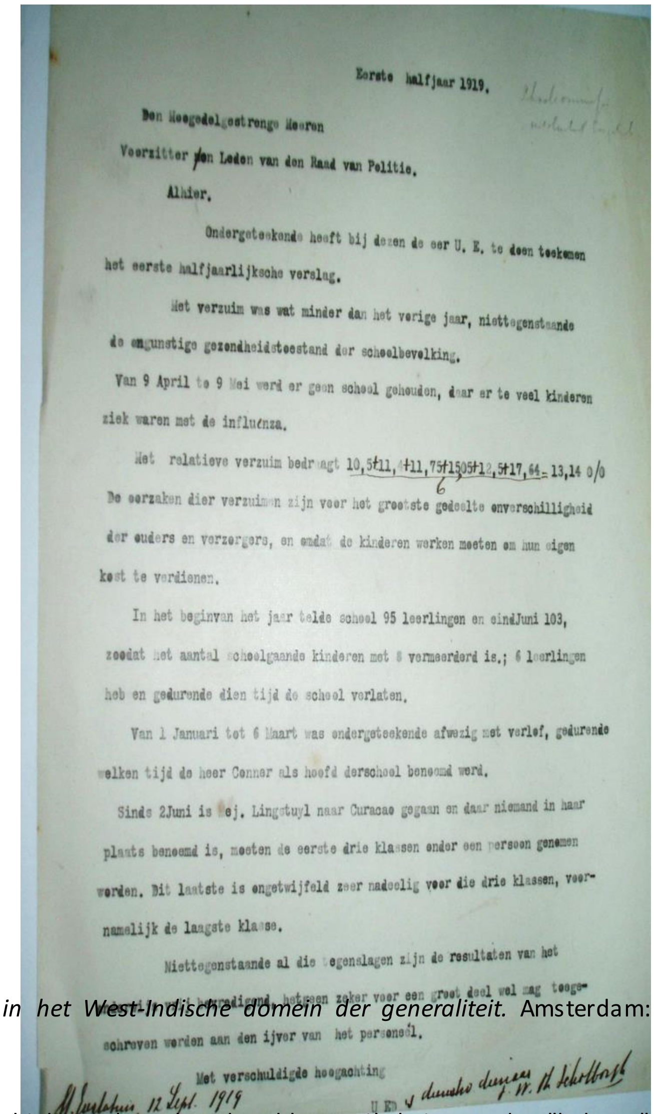
245 Broad/Extensive Education.

added to the list. Beside those subjects, this ordinance also decided that in the highest classes (of the six year curriculum), the principles of Spanish and English could be taught.[246]

Apart from the issue of the restructuration of the educational system, the problem of funding continued to be a thorn in the colonial flesh. Even though in the “fatherland” a struggle was being waged over the need for financial equality between special and public schools, and even though there was eventually recognition of equal status of these schools in the Netherlands, the Colonial Council still resisted the move.[247]

On 11 June 1912, an amendment to the Education Regulation of 1907[248] was issued in which the subsidies were found to be too low. Once again, the issue of funding came to the fore in the Netherlands Antilles. In fact, the issue of funding has been one of the most influential variables in the development of the educational system in this part of the Dutch Kingdom.

On 4 January 1913, there was a note of change. Art. 2 determined that for the schools in the main localities of the other islands of the colony, there should



Eerste halfjaar 1919.

Den Hoogedelgestrenge Heeren

Voorzitter en Leden van den Raad van Politie.

Alhier.

Ondergeteekende heeft bij dezen de eer U. E. te doen toekomen het eerste halfjaarlijksche verslag.

Het verzuim was wat minder dan het verige jaar, niettegenstaande de ongunstige gezondheidstoestand der schoolbevolking.

Van 9 April te 9 Mei werd er geen school gehouden, daar er te veel kinderen ziek waren met de influenza.

Het relatieve verzuim bedraagt 10,5+11,4+11,75+15,05+12,5+17,64 / 6 = 13,14 o/o

De oorzaken dier verzuimen zijn voor het grootste gedeelte onverschilligheid der ouders en verzorgers, en omdat de kinderen werken moeten om hun eigen kost te verdienen.

In het beginvan het jaar telde school 95 leerlingen en eindJuni 103, zoodat het aantal schoolgaande kinderen met 8 vermeerderd is.; 6 leerlingen heb en gedurende dien tijd de school verlaten.

Van 1 Januari tot 6 Maart was ondergeteekende afwezig met verlof, gedurende welken tijd de heer Conner als hoofd derschool benoemd werd.

Sinds 2Juni is Mej. Lingstuyl naar Curacao gegaan en daar niemand in haar plaats benoemd is, moeten de eerste drie klassen onder een persoon genomen worden. Dit laatste is ongetwijfeld zeer nadeelig voor die drie klassen, voornamelijk de laagste klasse.

Niettegenstaande al die tegenslagen zijn de resultaten van het

schreven werden aan den ijver van het personeel.

Met verschuldigde hoogachting

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246 Cfr. Hartog, J. (1964), pp. 510-512.

247 Cfr. Van Grol, G. (1980). *De grondpolitiek in het West-Indische domein der generaliteit.* Amsterdam: Emmering, p. 9.

248 Also mentioned in the Bell-Lancaster method, which was based on the abler pupils being used as "helpers" to the teacher, passing on the information they had learned to other students. The Bell-Lancaster method was found very useful by 19th-century educators, as it proved to *be a cheap way of making primary education more inclusive, thus making it possible to increase the average* **class Size**. See Caruso, M. (2008). Order through the Gaze: A Comparative Perspective of the Construction of Visibility in Monitorial Schooling (German States — Spain, approx. 1815–1848), in *Encounters on Education* (9), pp. 147–172, p. 151.

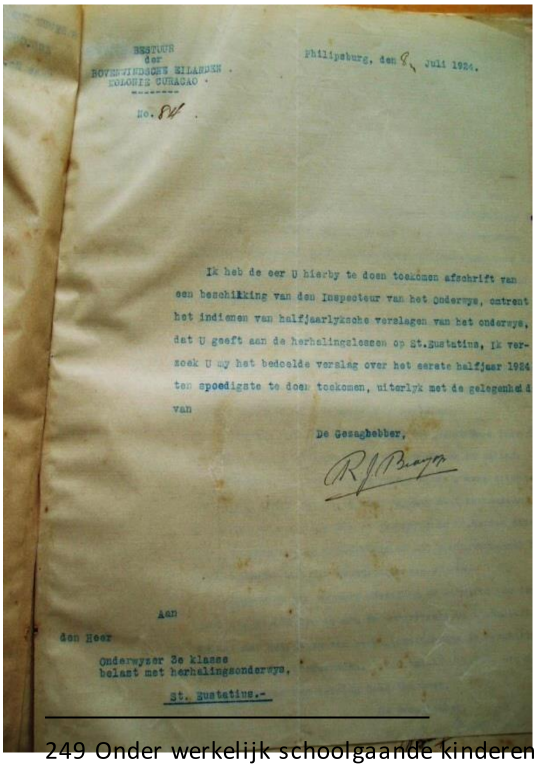
be a teacher for the primary school. If the number of school children surpassed two hundred or more, there should be an assistant teacher.

After this, there arose a certain tension concerning subsidies between Catholic and public schools. Some of the main differences had to do with the classes of public schools, which were far smaller.

The same document defined what was to be understood by "school children" in Art. 47. For the application of Articles 43-44 of these regulations, real school children and pupils were to be understood as children of at least six years of age, who had not missed more than one third of all school time.[249]

However, this rule was not valid for public education because, regardless the percentage, the teachers were still paid. In special schools, however, if 50 students were reduced by two thirds (e.g. due to absence, sickness or any other reason like working during harvest), the school lost its subsidies to pay for the teacher.

The Dutch Antilles had to wait until 1946 for the *Staten of Curaçao* to enforce the equality of the primary education across the board. Eventually, also temporary equal subsidies were established for kindergartens.



BESTUUR
der
BOVENWINDSCHE EILANDEN.
KOLONIE CURACAO.

No. 84.

Philipsburg, den 8 Juli 1924.

Ik heb de eer U hierby te doen toekomen afschrift van een beschikking van den Inspecteur van het Onderwys, omtrent het indienen van halfjaarlyksche verslagen van het onderwys, dat U geeft aan de herhalingslessen op St.Eustatius, Ik verzoek U my het bedoelde verslag over het eerste halfjaar 1924 ten spoedigste te doen toekomen, uiterlyk met de gelegenheid van

De Gezaghebber,

Aan
den Heer
Onderwyzer 3e klasse
belast met herhalingsonderwys,
St. Eustatius.-

The amount of Antillean teachers increased after 1946, mostly due to the improvement of primary and secondary education and the Antillean way in which teachers were trained. This quantitative development in the area of primary education increased the chances of getting a job in education, which made the teaching profession more appealing.

Besides funding, the second point of contention in Dutch Antillean education was the so-called "principle of neutrality". The principle

249 Onder werkelijk schoolgaande kinderen en leerlingen, wordt voor de toepassing van de art. 43-44 dezer verordening verstaan kinderen van ten minste zesjarigen leeftijd, die niet meer dan *een derde van alle schooltijden* hebben verzuimd. See Dahlhaus, G. (1917), p. 107.

determined that education, whether in private or public schools, had to be conducted in a neutral spirit. The religious belief systems of all students had to be respected. However, in 1907, the Colonial Council abolished this principle.[250]

Language issue

Another topic dealt with during the discussions of the Ordinance was the issue about which official and foreign languages were taught in primary schools. In 1917, some members of the Colonial Council proposed that the unofficial national language should be allowed at school (Papiamento in Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao and English in Saba, St. Maarten and St Eustatius). Nonetheless, the School Commission stopped this development.

In 1918, however, the topic of the language of instruction was brought up again in the Ordinance, with an amendment of change of January 4, Art. 43 ad. 3, which stipulated:

> Instruction is given, insofar as it is possible, in the Dutch language and during at least eighteen hours per week, of which a maximum of two hours is allotted to the subject of useful crafts.[251]

Because of the compulsory character of Dutch language instruction, the inspector, while on school visits, took the progress in Dutch as a measure in his or her assessment of the pupils. However, an educational conference held in The Hague at the time strongly urged the use of the local language as the language of instruction.[252]

Thomas Sebastiaan Pleyte (1864-1926), Minister of the Colonies during the cabinet of Cort van der Linden (August 29, 1913—September 9, 1918) and a defender of the rights of the colonial subjects, especially in Indonesia, remarked:

250 Cfr. Römer Kenepa, N. (1990), pp. 44-46.

251 "Het onderwijs gegeven wordt zooveel mogelijk in de Nederlandse taal en gedurende ten minste 18 uren per week, waarvan ten hoogste 2 uren mogen worden besteed aan het vak der nuttige handwerken". Cfr. Dahlhaus, G. (1917), p. 107.

252 In another chapter on the language issue, we look at the current dilemma concerning the language of instruction.

> As for the use of that language in schools of the Colony, Articles 13 and 43 of the Curaçao educational regulations give the freedom, whenever the situation calls for it, to employ a spoken language different from Dutch.[253]

Furthermore, he would express his philosophy concerning the issue of language in the Dutch colonies as follows:

> I admit to the representatives that the education provided in the school should be social education, that it does not matter to teach children a certain amount of knowledge about a language that later on will remain a foreign language to them.
>
> I agree with the representatives that the inhabitants of the Windward Islands actually speak English, and the lower classes, whose children fill the schools, could miss a great deal of the instruction given in Dutch.
>
> We articulate the hope: that English could be the language of instruction on the Windward Island and the common language on the Leeward Islands, at least in the 'outside' schools, without neglecting Dutch in the process.[254]

Despite these positive developments, the language matter was not solved. Like the issue of financing, the language of instruction was (and continues to be) a focus of debate. In 1920, attempts were made to establish a new ordinance concerning this matter, but it failed.[255]

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253 "Wat het gebruik van die taal op de scholen in de Kolonie betreft, laten de artikelen 13 en 43 van de Curaçaose onderwijsverordening vrijheid, om, waar de toestanden zulks noodig maken, van een andere volkstaal dan 't Nederlandsch gebruik te maken". See Dahlhaus, G. (1917), p. 107.

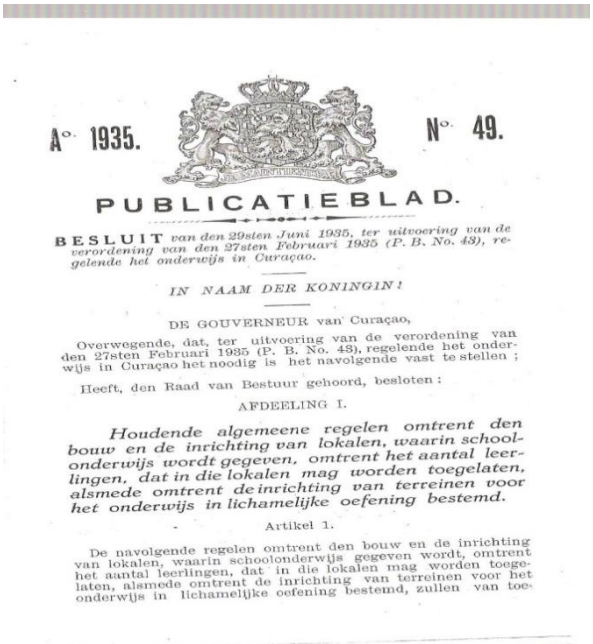
254 "Ik geef den gedachten afgevaardigde volkomen toe, dat het op de school te geven onderwijs moet zijn maatschappelijk onderwijs, dat het er niet op aankomt, om den kinderen een zekere hoeveelheid kennis bij te brengen omtrent een taal, welke voor hen naderhand toch een vreemde zal blijven.

Ik stem toe aan den gedachten afgevaardigde, dat op de Bovenwindse eilanden de bewoners gewoonlijk Engelsch spreken en de mindere menschen, wier kinderen hoofdzakelijk de school daar bevolken, kunnen een groot deel missen van het onderwijs in het Nederlandsch, dat daar gegeven wordt.

Wij spreken de hoop uit: mocht toch voor de Bovenwindse eilanden het Engelsch en op de Benedenwindse eilanden, ten minste op de buitenscholen, de volkstaal het voermiddel zijn bij het aanbrengen van het onderwijs, zonder dat het Nederlandsch daar worde verwaarloosd!", in Dahlhaus, G. (1917), p. 107.

255 Cfr. Dahlhaus, G. (1917), pp. 47-48. Also Dalhuizen, L., Donk, R., Hoefte, R. & Frans Steegh (eds.) (1997), pp. 120-121.

1935—1954



A°. 1935. N°. 49.

PUBLICATIEBLAD.

BESLUIT *van den 29sten Juni 1935, ter uitvoering van de verordening van den 27sten Februari 1935 (P. B. No. 43), regelende het onderwijs in Curaçao.*

IN NAAM DER KONINGIN!

DE GOUVERNEUR van Curaçao,

Overwegende, dat, ter uitvoering van de verordening van den 27sten Februari 1935 (P. B. No. 43), regelende het onderwijs in Curaçao het noodig is het navolgende vast te stellen ;

Heeft, den Raad van Bestuur gehoord, besloten :

AFDEELING I.

Houdende algemeene regelen omtrent den bouw en de inrichting van lokalen, waarin schoolonderwijs wordt gegeven, omtrent het aantal leerlingen, dat in die lokalen mag worden toegelaten, alsmede omtrent de inrichting van terreinen voor het onderwijs in lichamelijke oefening bestemd.

Artikel 1.

De navolgende regelen omtrent den bouw en de inrichting van lokalen, waarin schoolonderwijs gegeven wordt, omtrent het aantal leerlingen, dat in die lokalen mag worden toegelaten, alsmede omtrent de inrichting van terreinen voor het onderwijs in lichamelijke oefening bestemd, zullen van toe-

The development of the oil industry in Aruba and Curaçao made the colonial government realize that social economic development called for a good and expanded educational system. Hence, in 1935, the colonial Council succeeded in implementing a new educational ordinance. This ordinance experienced some changes throughout time, and some parts were never even implemented. However, this ordinance is still valid for kindergartens and the exams to gain qualifications for primary education (*L.O. – aktes – Lager Onderwijs*).256 When this educational ordinance was issued, a distinction was made between three school types, namely: 1) ordinary basic/primary schools A and B (*Gewone lagere scholen A en B*), 2) extended primary education (*Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs*, or ULO), and 3) more extended education (*Meer Uitgebreid Onderwijs*, or MULO).[257]

In 1939, there was a committee to establish an institution for secondary education on Curaçao. Oil played a significant role in the process as people from Shell became actively involved in this committee. However, two different sides struggled to shape education policy according to their own views. Some of the committee members wanted a neutral secondary education and others, in particular the vicariate, wanted a Catholic secondary education. The first secondary school would finally be established in 1941, after a compromise was reached. In 1949, the school was turned into a complete five year General Secondary Education (*HBS*).

256 The USM and UNA demand different qualifications.

257 Cfr. Faneyte, L. & Kleimoedig, R. (1982), p. 30.

The GLO-A schools were built on the outskirts of the districts and were special schools, with a Roman Catholic signature. Education in those schools was free and there were six consecutive years of study.[258]

The GLO-B schools comprised six or seven years of consecutive study and also offered free education. They were usually in the city or at the borders of the city.

According to W.J. Goslinga259, the level of education in 1945 was such that they could start to educate boys to become teachers. In order to strengthen his program, he went to the Netherlands to recruit qualified teachers.[260]

Under the influence of a growing political consciousness after the Second World War, there was a certain pressure to reach uniformity in education. This effort led, in 1954, to the conversion of the GLO-A schools into GLO-B schools. This development continued and in 1962, the GLO-B schools adopted the same program as the MULO-*onderbouw*.

The *MULO* were schools with ten consecutive years of study. The first six or seven study years were called the MULO-*onderbouw*, while the subsequent four years were the MULO-*bovenbouw*. MULO schools required a payment of fees.[261]

With the establishment of the Department of Education and Popular Development in 1943, the colonial government showed that they wanted to institutionalize their duty and responsibility vis-à-vis education.

Apparently, it was Goslinga who structured the chaotic Antillean school system. He succeeded to raise certain school types up to the level of Dutch standards in order to have their diplomas recognized.[262]

Due to the attempt to make educational legislation uniform with that in the Netherlands as well as the total dependence on teachers and educational material from the

258 See: Country Report Netherlands Antilles (2009), p. 21.

259 He was Inspector of Education for 20 (1937-1958).

260 Cfr. Faneyte, L. & Kleimoedig, R. (1982), p. 31.

261 Idem, p. 31.

262 Idem, p. 30.

Netherlands, the educational system in the Netherlands Antilles gradually became completely Dutch. This was especially the case where educational content and organization were concerned.[263]

This was a development noticeable for a long time. The consequence was visible in 1968, when the Mammoet Education Act[264] was introduced in the Netherlands, the same thing happened in the Netherlands Antilles, but, regrettably without the corresponding ingredients to support such a large scale education reform.[265] The objective continued to be a transition to the Dutch educational system.

CONCLUSION

The state of education in the Dutch Antilles between 1816 and 1945 was marked by a lack of the colonial governmental commitment to education. This had to do with the problem of

263 See: "Country Report Netherlands Antilles (2009), p. 20.

264 About this act: Mammmoetwet: Op 1 augustus 1968 trad de wet in werking. Er was echter ook sprake van tegenstand. Zo zei het ARP-kamerlid Anton Roosjen bij de stemming in de Tweede Kamer: "Laat die mammoet maar in het sprookjesleven voortbestaan". Hier dankt de wet haar (bij)naam aan.

Ontstaan Mavo, Havo en VWO:

De belangrijkste veranderingen die de wet teweeg bracht, waren het verdwijnen van de huishuidschool en kweekschool. De MULO werd omgevormd tot de mavo en de HBS werd de Havo. Het gymnasium bleef bestaan, naast het nieuwe Atheneum binnen het VWO. Omdat het voor leerlingen nu mogelijk was om zelf vakken te kiezen ontstond de term 'pretpakket', voor een vakkenpakket zonder exacte vakken. Ook werd het makkelijker om door te stromen van het ene niveau naar het andere. Verder werd de brugklas ingesteld, een klas met leerlingen van verschillende niveaus, om uit te zoeken wat de capaciteit van de leerlingen was.

Regels eindexamen:

De leerlingen die nu eindexamen doen, hebben weer met hele andere relingen te maken. De MAVO is bijvoorbeeld opgegaan in het VMBO. De brugklas is, ondanks het voortbestaan van de naam, al een aantal jaar na de invoering stopgezet, omdat het concept niet werkte. Leerlingen moeten nu voor het centraal examen een voldoende halen en mogen hun cijfers niet meer compenseren met die van het schoolexamen. http://www.isgeschiedenis.nl/nieuws/mammoetwet-van-1968/ (Accessed on 05 May 2013).

265 Idem, p. 21.

financing, the issue of the language of instruction and the government's rather reluctant acceptance of the churches' participation in the education of both the free and enslaved colonial populations.

The churches did much to ensure that the enslaved population could enjoy education. Nevertheless, their actions were influenced by the colonial mentality of the time and the religious goals of the actors (Catholic priests and Protestant pastors). Thus, in their efforts to support the enslaved people, the churches, either directly or indirectly, helped to train them to accept and embrace their positions and roles within the existing social structure. Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that the churches also did a lot of good work and paved the way for the education of poor children.

The "principle of neutrality" influenced the labor of religious educators and caused the expansion of education into general education. Religious schools not only instructed their pupils in religious matters, but also taught them in elementary subjects, such as English, mathematics, writing, singing and drawing.

It could, in fact, be argued that the colonial government did not perform well in the educational field, especially not during the slavery years.

It would be interesting to investigate to what extent the socio-cultural differences between the enslaved populations of the different islands were taken into account by the government and the educators. For example, how did the fact that the enslaved populations were not allowed to marry impact their family situation and the education of their children? The treatment of the enslaved workforce in the Dutch Caribbean was also very different from that in Suriname and other Caribbean islands.

Only with the abolition of slavery in 1863 were laws instituted that would bring about change to the overall situation of those who had been enslaved. Up to the beginning of the 20th century, education was very flawed. There were changes, but no clear vision. This was primarily due to the lack of true governmental interest.

TELLING THE STORIES: WHO, WHEN AND WHY

INTRODUCTION

This section reflects our fieldwork, which was done between 2005 and 2007, mostly in St. Maarten. As explained in the general introduction, we administered questionnaires online and conducted interviews with people from different groups relevant to our research.

INTERVIEWS

The list and names of the 27 interviewees can be found in the first part of this dissertation. During the interviews, we used the same questions as in the questionnaire; however, sometimes we were able to ask additional questions depending on the course of the conversation. At times, we just allowed the respondent to tell their own stories about their experience of education.

The transcript of the interviews, totaling 198 pages was done by former students of mine and friends. We shared this task with others because the recordings were very long and, sometimes, the colloquial accent of the speakers made the endeavor more arduous.

In 2004, within the framework of the master research, we also interviewed the Dominican Sisters of Voorschoten at their Convent in Voorschoten (see picture below).

QUESTIONNAIRES

As mentioned in the introduction in part 1, we received the following responses to the questionnaires:

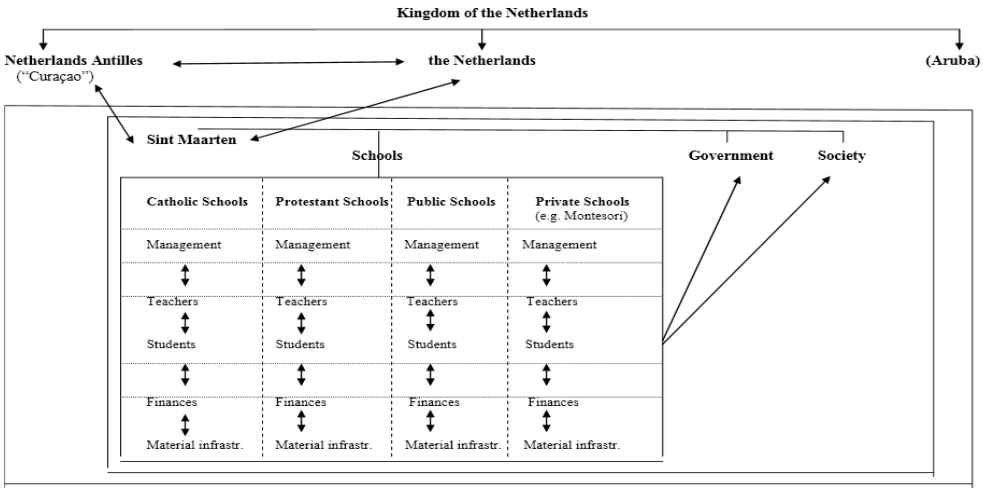
	Teachers	Students	Members school management	Government personnel
http://www.ngoaingutinhoc.com/milton	54	122	25	19
In person (same questionnaire)	34	198	33	45
Total	88	320	58	64

We used three models of questionnaires, which can be found in appendix 2.

We use the interviews and responses to the questionnaires to describe the mood or atmosphere about education in St. Maarten over the past fifty years. We emphasize some topics more than others, depending on their relevance.

PERIODIZATION OF THE EMERGENCE OF THE EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Based on our research, especially on the interviews, we divided the development of education on the Island into five different phases during which separate education providers emerged on the Island. However, this periodization should not be conceived of as a series of once-for-all events. Even though each period started at a specific moment of time, each period continued to unfold within the subsequent period. The following model is used to structure our field research.



PERIODIZATION OF EDUCATION IN ST. MAARTEN

We will speak of five moments:

The establishment and consolidation of the public network

The establishment and consolidation of the Catholic network

The emergence of non-Catholic Christian schools

The emergence of alternative or private schools

The emergence of 'remedial' initiatives

ESTABLISHMENT AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE PUBLIC NETWORK

The **first phase** of St. Maarten education began with the birth of Oranje School, the oldest school on the Island. This phase began approximately 160 years ago. Furthermore, the Oranje School is not only the oldest school on the Island, it was also the first school where an Afro-Antillean man (Camille Baly) and an Afro-Antillean woman (Patricia Friday-Bell) became school principals.

THE ORANJE SCHOOL

The Oranje School is the oldest functioning school on St. Maarten. The *Openbare school* or Public Oranje School was founded in 1851 in a wooden building. The wooden building was standing already in 1739 and was formerly a Dutch Reformed Church, but the building had been used as a hotel, library, home for the school principal and finally a school.

Throughout the years, the infrastructure of the school grew. Lt. Governor Johannes Didericus Crol bought the current site on Friday, 25 April 1851 for 3,350 Guilders. The construction of the school buildings, situated in a former cemetery, began in 1919 during the administration of Acting Lt. Governor G.J. Thymstra. The official inauguration of the premises took place in 1921. In 1923, Lt. Governor Richard Beaujon authorized the start of the construction of the east wing of the school. Forty-one years later, in 1964, Director Van

den Heuvel commissioned further expansions to accommodate MULO[266] students. In 1995/1996, after the devastation caused by Hurricane Luis, the school had to be thoroughly renovated.

The school's pupils came from Dutch Quarter, French Quarter, Middle Region, Lower Princess Quarter and other surrounding areas. It is noteworthy that the school has always been a landmark on the Island, and has had many of St. Maarten's most distinguished citizens sitting on its benches, such as Governor Eugene Holiday, former Managing Director of GEBE, Julius Lambert, the company's current Managing Director, William Brooks and the Windward Islands Bank's Managing Director, Jan Beaujon.

Gevolgen van de orkaan 'Luis', die op 4 en 5 september 1995 over Sint Maarten raasde en een enorme ravage aanrichtte. Tot dan toe stond orkaan 'Hugo' sinds 1989 genoteerd als grootste vernieler op alle drie de Bovenwindse eilanden.

Much of the school's development took place under the leadership of Helmich Snijders who, despite being an Evangelical Christian and one of the co-founders of the first Evangelical school in St. Maarten, dedicated half a life-time to teach at and lead the Oranje School.

Some of the people whom we interviewed told us that public schools, especially the Oranje School,[268] had a keener interest in English and English teaching material than other schools on the Island. English-speaking parents from the French side of the Island often

266 MULO stands for Secondary Advanced Elementary Education.

268 Interview with Millicent.

opted to send their children to the Oranje School, as was the case with Louis Fleming and his sister.[269]

Our interviewees also mentioned that in previous years, there were neither uniforms nor mingling between Oranje School and St. Joseph's (its Catholic counterpart). Even though the locals knew each other, there were no real manifest links between the public and Catholic schools.

Another important detail was that public schools were perceived to be either less developed or poorer than the other schools. The background of the pupils was less "well educated" than of the pupils in Catholic schools. This might have to do with the social background of the majority of the pupils. Nonetheless, their results were good. Some think that the success rate was not intrinsically linked to the quality of the school, but rather to the smaller size of the classes.

The consolidation of the public network

When the Oranje School was divided into two schools in 1960, the elementary section remained in the Oranje School, while the secondary section became the 'Johan Philips' School'.

During the 19th century there was another public school, namely, the Hill School. This school catered mainly to students from the Dutch Quarter (L.P.Q), Middle Region and even parts of the French side. Dutch was the language of instruction since most parents wanted this. This school was later renamed after the great North American civil rights leader 'Martin Luther King Jr.'

In 1919, a school with only two classes was founded in Colebay. It was put under the leadership of Johan Henry Buncamper and known by the name of 'Colebay School'. In 1967, this school became a dependence of the Oranje School. At the time, it had four classes and was under the leadership of Willem de Graaf and his wife. In 1968, it acquired six other classes and became an Elementary School under the leadership of Camille Baly (1968-1975). Between 1969 and 1970, the name of the school was changed to 'Leonard Conner School'.

269 Locals from the Saint Martin side did not speak French; only the foreign upper class did. In fact, not even the Mayor could speak French well.

William Marlin became Principal in 1976. When he became a member of the Island Council, G. White-Mathew succeeded him. In 1992, the school was expanded with an extra first grade.

Towards 1989, for the past two centuries, the educational needs of St. Maarten had been growing rapidly. The existing primary schools were already full or the children had passed the age where they could enter grades one or two. Those pupils were offered remedial education at the Prince Willem Alexander School, which was then called the John Larmonie School. However, since the number of pupils kept growing, some classes had to be housed in a building directly opposite to the Prince William Alexander School. This section was given the name of St. Peter's Public. In 1992, the two schools merged and settled in a building on Watermelon Road in St. Peters. We were told by the Principal, Bernadette Richardson, that the intention was to set up an English and a separate Dutch track. However, as the population continued to increase, the school outgrew the building on Watermelon Road and the sixth grade and Kindergarten had to be moved to Ebenezer. In 1997, the new building, which was to host both schools was finished on Blueberry Road in Retreat Estate. In 2001, the primary school was divided into a Dutch and English school. The Dutch school moved to Colebay in October 2001. In February 2001, the school was officially renamed 'Charles Leopold Bell School'. On 31 January 2002, the English school was officially called 'Ruby Labega Primary School'.

Due to the growth in population, in 1994, another public school was founded in Hope Estate in Sucker Garden. Even though this school is often known under the name of 'Sucker Garden Primary School', its official name is 'Marie Genevieve De Weever School'. Due to the lack of a proper building, the classes were housed in different locations (at Zagersgut in the Hewey Building of the Philipsburg Seventh-Day Adventist Church, in the Richardson Building and in the Bible Baptist Church). Afterwards another grade was added and, in 1997, all classes were located in the current building at Hope Estate.

General observations

In the 1970s and 1980s a demographic explosion took place in St. Maarten270. The tourism industry was flourishing and this meant that people from other islands came to the Island in

270 Guadeloupe elaborated on this topic with his interviewees. See Guadeloupe, F. (2005). *Chanting Down the*

order to tap into the Island's bonanza. Many of these adults did not arrive alone or had (more) children while in St. Maarten, overstretching the capabilities of the local school facilities. Thereafter, new schools were needed, which were established in different parts of the Dutch territory.

The new demographic configuration of the community focused attention on the issue of the primary language of instruction. After many vicissitudes, in the public schools, this question was solved by giving parents the choice between English-medium schools (Oranje School, Ruby Labega Primary and Marie Genevieve De Weever) and Dutch-medium schools (Charles Leopold Bell School and Martin Luther King Jr. School).

ESTABLISHMENT AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE CATHOLIC NETWORK

The second phase in the development of the educational system in St. Maarten was highly influenced by the Catholic Church's incursions in teaching. This strand of the Island's history began when the Catholic bishop of Curaçao requested that Religious Sisters be sent to St. Maarten. St. Maarten would become the first Windward Island to have a Catholic school.

Establishment of the Catholic network

The task of providing Catholic education in St. Maarten fell upon the shoulders of the Dominican Sisters of Voorschoten, who would lay the foundations for the current Catholic educational system. Their convent and the school, which were named after St. Joseph, were housed in the same building on Front Street, and were blessed in 1890.

The Sisters became involved in schooling in keeping with the spirit and mores of the time in the Netherlands and much of Western Europe. They came to the Island to evangelize and provide educational and medical services. Even though most Sisters were from the Netherlands, later on, there were also local sisters, such as Sr. Modesta (Claire Connor's aunt) and Sr. Pacientia (the great-aunt of the Connor, working at RBTT).

New Jerusalem: The politics of belonging on Saint Martin & Sint Maarten, Amsterdam: Rosenberg Publishers, pp. 21-22.

Consolidation of a Catholic educational network in St. Maarten

Catholic education became truly consolidated on the Island between 1965 and 1994 when most of the Catholic schools were founded. Sr. Constance and, especially Sr. Marie Laurence played a key role in a thirty-year process that established a strong Catholic educational network in St. Maarten.

Seeing that the school population of St. Joseph's School had grown rapidly, towards the end of the 1960s, permission was given to build more classrooms. In 1968, the St. Joseph School was divided into an Elementary and a Secondary school. However, since the student population kept on expanding, in 1978, St. Joseph's was eventually split into three different schools. This further restructuring helped to decentralize Catholic education on the island, resulting in three schools in three different areas: (1) St. Joseph's with 11 classes, which remained where it had always been; (2) the Old Pond Side School Primary School, later renamed after Sr. Borgia, with 6 classes on Cannegieter Street, Pond Fill, Phillipsburg and (3) Sr. Magda's Primary School with 6 classes, which moved to the St. Peters area.

In June 1987, a new elementary school was commissioned. Initially, it would have been a new facility for Sister Magda's Primary, but eventually, it became a school in its own right, St. Dominic Primary, in the South Reward area. The school officially opened in January 1989.

With the foundation of Sister Marie Laurence School in 1994, Catholic education was brought to Middle Region, another area on the Dutch side of the Island territory.

The 'Catholic touch' in the Sisters' schools

As was customary at the time, rituals, which were considered to be essential to Catholic practice, were taken up in the curriculum of Catholic schools. There were daily Religious Education classes and every couple of weeks, students went to Confession. According to our interviewees, the students did not perceive this as a burden. We were told that 'it was fun' and 'even Methodists went to Confession'.

Our interviews and questionnaires indicate that both parents and students thought that Catholic schools were places where children were prepared to lead a good moral life that was inspired by (religious) values, which were passed on from generation to

generation. Lake told us that the social control was strong, but not oppressive.[271] Similar cases can be found on other islands, where schools did not provide any particular training in citizenship, but "teaching civic knowledge and attitudes was considered a moral imperative".272

SR. CONSTANCE

The prototypical Catholic school in St. Maarten was St Joseph and one of its pioneers was Sr. Constance, one of our interviewees.

According to Voges, Sr. Constance arrived in St. Maarten in 1953 and later became the headmaster of St. Joseph's. Sr. Constance told us, however, that she had moved to the Island in 1952. She worked on the Island between 1952-1960 and 1963-1990, with an interval of three years in Aruba (from 1960-1963).

At the time when Milton Peters College (MPC) was founded, Sr. Constance retired from active duty. She returned to the Netherlands in 1990 after spending 35 years in St. Maarten. 21 of those years, she spent in education. Throughout the years that she lived on the Island, Sr. Constance did many jobs. She was in charge of the mail for the schools and the convent, collected stamps and for years did the administration for the Catholic School Board. She was the Principal of St. Joseph's until 1960, during which there was a noticeable improvement in the administration of the school. Some said that she was the perfect bookkeeper.[273] Next to her administrative tasks, she also taught arithmetic and book-keeping, being very precise in her teaching.[274] Even after her retirement, she continued to assist the teaching and administrative personnel of the MPC (for instance, coordinating Religious Education).[275]

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271 Interview with Marlese Lake

272 Fergus, H. (2003). *A History of Education in the British Leeward Islands, 1835-1945.* Barbados: The University of the West Indies Press, p. 55.

273 Voges, M. (1990). *De Zusters Dominicanessen van Voorschoten*, p. 29.

274 Idem, p. 34.

275 George, M. (2010). *Catholic Education in the Dutch Caribbean: the work of the Dominican Sisters or Voorschoten in Sint Maarten, Netherlands Antilles*. Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing, p. 23

Some of our interviewees felt that the Sisters —including Sr. Constance— kept to themselves, while others felt this way in line with their mission and did not see integration into the community as an issue. On many occasions, we were told that Sr. Constance had always been ready to help others.

THE SISTERS' FOCUS ON EMPLOYMENT-ORIENTED PROJECTS

One of the Sisters' concerns was to help people acquire skills which would help them to find employment. The creation of some of the Catholic schools mentioned above was initially a corollary of these practical priorities.

The first employment-oriented initiative was the creation in 1965 of a 'school of domestic economy'. It started with sewing courses for 33 pupils. The course was established once the retirement home, 'Sweet Repose,' was closed down and two classes of St. Joseph College were housed there. Although our interviewees mentioned that the establishment of vocational education in the colonies was often understood as a deliberate attempt to educate the 'natives' to do only menial tasks, these kinds of educational programs in St. Maarten greatly benefitted those who could not (yet) undertake more academic programs. The interviewees corroborated this point of view and insisted that all students were able to find work in those days, be it on the Island or overseas. In many cases, they not only did well, they also 'made it'.

In 1968 Sr. Marie Laurence arrived on the Island, whom we also interviewed. Together with Sr. Constance, she also left an indelible imprint on the Catholic educational landscape in St. Maarten.

Sr. Marie Laurence arrived with the task of establishing a school for domestic economics. At the time, there was no building. This project was conceived with three goals in mind: (1) to serve students, especially girls, whose talent lay in the area of practical intelligence rather than in abstract thinking; (2) to ensure students' access to the job market, who were not be able to go for further studies overseas, and (3) to impart basic practical educational skills (how to run a home, healthy eating patterns, etc.).[276]

276 Idem, p. 25.

At first, the girls used to go to the Little Bay Hotel and learn how to make beds and other chores. This sort of on-the-job training had two disadvantages: it depended on whether there were guests and there was no adequate public transportation for the girls to get to work.[277] Towards 1972, the Sisters obtained a locale in the precincts of an old sewing factory, annex printing press used by a local newspaper in Cul-de-Sac.[278] The school formally opened in 1974 under the name of Sundial School, comprising also a class on salesmanship. The school was under the supervision of the Catholic School Board until 1976.[279]

In 1968, the Sisters worked on other educational projects. Sr. Borgia was the Principal of St Joseph's School at the time. When Sr. Lamberta arrived, the school was divided into two sections. Sr. Lamberta became the Headmistress of the Primary School, which continued to be called St Joseph's, and Sr. Borgia became the Principal of the MULO (according to the Sisters) or the MAVO (according to Voges). Henceforth, this school would be called Father Nieuwenhuys' School.[280]

The following years saw the growth of St. Maarten's educational system as a whole. A technical school and school of domestic economy were established, a MULO and a school for simple tourist administration (E.T.A.O.). In 1976, the combination of two MAVOs and a Technical School resulted in the creation of the Milton Peters' College, which meant that students for MAVO, L.T.S. and E.T.A.O. could enroll in the new school community.[281] Much of this had to do with increased financial assistance from the Netherlands.

In 1978, another fusion (of the Sewing factory annex Printing press, the later school of domestic economy and the B.B.O.) gave rise to the foundation of Sr. Magda's Primary. At the same time, the 'Old Pondside School' was founded in the 'Old Sweet Repose' building, which is now known as Sr. Borgia's Elementary.[282]

277 Idem, p.26.

278 Idem, p. 27.

279 Voges, M. (1990). *De Zusters Dominicanessen van Voorschoten*, p. 36.

280 Idem, p. 41.

281 George, M. (2010), p. 29.

282 Voges, M. (1990), p. 42.

Eleven years later, on 27 January 1989, St Dominic's Primary was officially opened in South Reward.[283] This school would become one of the most prestigious schools on the Island.

It may rightly be said that between 1968 and 1989, the Catholic Church, especially through the Dominican Sisters of Voorschoten, profiled itself as a serious educational agent and firmly established its position on the Island.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Catholic school network owes an indelible debt to the Dominican Sisters of Voorschoten. Despite the Sisters' limitations, which were due to the pre-Vatican II mentality common when they were sent to St. Maarten, many of our interviewees indicated that they owed their success in later life to the training, moral support and financial help of the Sisters. Even though some felt that the Sisters had been overly reserved and failed to fully integrate into the Island's life, no one thought that they had stood in the way of St. Maarten's development and progress.

The Sisters were religious practitioners rather than critical theologians or social revolutionaries (like some liberation theologians in Latin America). They had a clearly practical agenda: to educate pupils to be able to find jobs (the jobs to which their pupils could aspire). The symbiotic and sometimes uncritical relationship between education and the labor market was not invented by the Sisters; it has always been a part of education.

THE EMERGENCE OF NON-CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

The **third phase** of St. Maarten's educational development was marked by bottom-up non-Catholic and non-governmental initiatives. This was a time when non-Catholic Christian schools were founded, namely, Christian Hillside, the Methodist Agogic Centre (MAC) and the Seventh-Day Adventist School.

Even though the sociological and theological vision behind the establishment of the Christian Hillside and Seventh Day Adventist schools respectively were different, they both

283 Idem, pp. 42-43.

shared a deep concern for the eschatological salvation of people. They sought to help children to become positive and disciplined human beings by forming a unified front between the home, the church and the school. Asha Stevens, one of the co-founders of the Christian Hillside School, expressed this idea when she explained that 'the reason was that our oldest daughter became 4 years old and we thought: 'Where are we going to send her to school'. All of a sudden we realized that there were no Christian schools and he [Snijders, her husband at the time] was at a public school. So he said: 'We have to do something'. So, of course, we started sending her to the great building, the Methodist kindergarten, but we started talking to the pastors and people that were actively involved in church. At that time, there were only the Roman Catholic schools and the public schools. There were no other denominational schools'."

Christian Hillside School

The main agents in the foundation of the Christian Hill School were Asha Stephens, Snijders, Pastor Muffet (Irish), Pastor Robert Mayor (an American Baptist), Hodge and Vlaun (who 'had just recently been converted to Christianity')[284]. The Lieutenant-Governor was also very helpful, since 'he felt that he was responsible for us'.[285] However, given the fact that Snijders was the Principal of the Oranje School, people felt that any deep involvement in the new school could have been construed as a conflict of interests. So Klaas Wikkert, a Dutchman who was working on the Island, was invited to get involved.

284 Interview with Asha Stevens.

285 Interview with Asha Stevens.

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ST. PETERS HILLSIDE SCHOOL IGNORED BY GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES FOR TWO YEARS

ST. PETERS -- The St. Peters Hillside School is presntly using a church building, a private home and the Youth Centre to house classes of young students attending the school. Two of the classes are housed in the Youth Centre, two in the church building and a fifth class is housed in a private home. Whenever it rains -- no classes are conducted, in the church class rooms due to fear of flooding -- the rain often leads to difficulties in the entering of the classrooms at the Youth Centre.

The above not only typifies shortcomings which, the school has put up with for two years but also dramatizes the terrible -- lack of accepted policy by local government, who have been directly responsible for this state of affairs.

An amount of 925,00 is paid monthly by government for the rent of these 3 class room facilities despite the fact that the St. Peters Hillside school is located in St. Peters.However, additional facilities have not been completed by government authorities, resulting in the present shortage of proper ones.

The kindergarten and elementary school was established in 1974 with 88 students who grew to 330 students in 1977 and is operated by the Foundation for Protestant and Christian Education.

The 1978/1979 school semester was initiated in August last year with no classrooms to house 65 students and two teachers because of unfulfilled promises that the classrooms-- will be terminated in time. To express the school's dissatisfaction with the situation -- the children had been transported by bus to the Administration Building where they were split in two classes. The demonstration generated enough interest from the government to locate additional classroom facilities.

Since the school's request for additional facilities -- two class rooms, toilet room and offices had been built but not quite completed. They still remain to be painted; furniture for these rooms have not bee paid for while toilets are not equipped for use. Instead these are used as storage rooms for building materials.

Although the school is government subsidized, some 35.000 guilders is owed to the school by government -- and the purchase of new teaching material made impossible by the lack of funds. The situation has become that serious that new students will not be enrolled at the school for the upcoming semester.

School principal, Mr. J. A.Warrentjes, told Morning Mirror that the construction works are actually to be carried by the Public Works department (of which dozens

ment workers should be commended at their interest -- shown in the school) but that the works are continuously hampered. The department's head, Mr/ Lexie Arnell does not bother to check on the school's needs while an architect (reportedly employed by the department) to carry out the necessary work -- does nothing, the school principal said.

For the past four weeks, for instance, work at the school has been halted--due to a lack of building material, department workers -- appear daily to resume their work but return to sitting under nearby trees awaiting the eventual arrival of such materials. The construction of suitable -- kindergarten facilities has been in theprocess for two years and still not completed -- as a roof has not been built over it.

Some 180 students and the school pergonnel are now forced to use four toilets. A parent of one attending student had been kind enough to donate some gravel, free of charge, to the school to be used for the school playgrounds. But the plan was partly carried out after a local contractor (Illidge Enterprises) in charge did not do so, as he claimed that he had not received payment from government for such, this paper was told.

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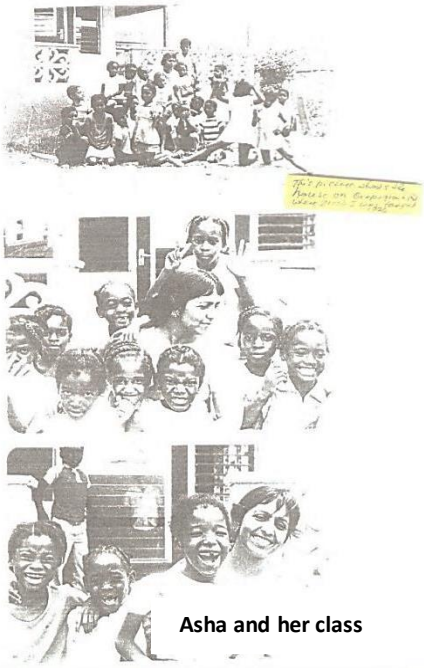


Asha and her class

For the Protestant community, it seemed as if nothing happened between 1968 and 1973. The Commissioner of Education, Richardson, tried to help them, but no structural assistance came. The situation changed in 1974 when St Peter's area started to be developed. The plot of land, where the Christian Hillside School now stands, was then reserved for a school with the understanding that they had to build something within six months or they would lose the land.

Seen that no financial aid was forthcoming from the Netherlands, the USA or Curaçao, Asha Stevens and Snijders (then still married) took a second mortgage to build the school (30.000 Guilders). A building constructor was found, Ernest Williams. Four classrooms and some toilets were built.

The Christian Hillside School officially started with 55 students, a legal condition for establishing a new school. However, as Asha nuanced: 'These were children that were not quite ready for school, but we had to start.'

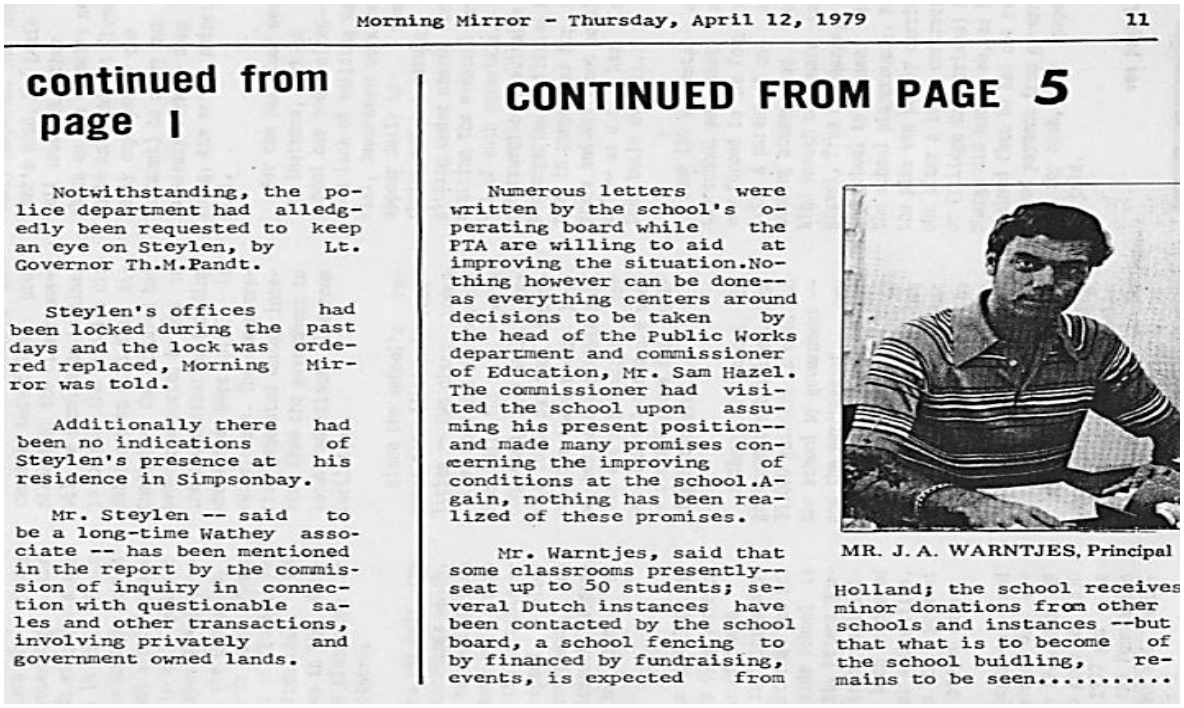
The new school faced challenges on different fronts, for instance, finding teachers and classrooms as well as implementing educational reforms.

Nobody wanted to teach in a school that was not yet established. In addition to that, budgetary constraints represented a real obstacle to find a place that could house the school.

Part of the problem was solved when Asha decided to go back into teaching. Her son had turned four and had to start formal education. By becoming the new school's first teacher, she could educate her son and realize the idea of having a Christian school.

The infrastructural challenges were met when a room at Larmonie Center and a little house on Marigold Hill Road were found. Grades Two and Three were combined with children of different ages and housed at Larmonie Center under the care of Asha. For Grade One, a male teacher was found in St Lucia. He stayed in the little house.

The setbacks encountered by the school were publically mentioned in the local newspaper. In *The Morning Mirror* from 1979, we can detect the feelings on this issue (see below).



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Notwithstanding, the police department had alledgedly been requested to keep an eye on Steylen, by Lt. Governor Th.M.Pandt.

Steylen's offices had been locked during the past days and the lock was ordered replaced, Morning Mirror was told.

Additionally there had been no indications of Steylen's presence at his residence in Simpsonbay.

Mr. Steylen -- said to be a long-time Wathey associate -- has been mentioned in the report by the commission of inquiry in connection with questionable sales and other transactions, involving privately and government owned lands.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Numerous letters were written by the school's operating board while the PTA are willing to aid at improving the situation.Nothing however can be done-- as everything centers around decisions to be taken by the head of the Public Works department and commissioner of Education, Mr. Sam Hazel. The commissioner had visited the school upon assuming his present position-- and made many promises concerning the improving of conditions at the school.Again, nothing has been realized of these promises.

Mr. Warntjes, said that some classrooms presently-- seat up to 50 students; several Dutch instances have been contacted by the school board, a school fencing to by financed by fundraising, events, is expected from

MR. J. A. WARNTJES, Principal

Holland; the school receives minor donations from other schools and instances --but that what is to become of the school buidling, remains to be seen.....

The school was classified as 'by mandate' and given subsidies for two teachers, Asha being the Acting Principal. However, since the St Lucian teacher was unable to produce his degrees several months into the school year, the newly appointed Chairperson of the School Board, Wilfred Manning, who also worked at the Court House, decided that the school should be closed in December. This was one of the most critical moments in the history of the school. However, rather than see the school closed down, Asha heightened her commitment to the project: 'No! You know what we are going to do?' — she said to herself— 'I will teach the first grade in the morning and, in the afternoon, I will have the

second and third grade.' That was the situation during November and December of that year. So, when Snijders went to Barbados to recruit English language teachers for the Oranje School, he also recruited one for the Christian Hillside School by the name of Carl. As of January 1975, the school had two teachers again: Carl in Grade One and Asha in Grades Two and Three.

Educational reforms dictated that the language of instruction should be English in Kindergarten and the first two years of elementary school (four years in total). David Mackay flew from England to give a number of workshops on a method he had developed called 'Breakthrough to literacy'. His work on the Island was financed by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation. Suddenly, the incipient Christian Hillside School found itself in a privileged position since Mackay expressed his desire to observe how Asha's pupils were reacting to his method. Moreover, while looking for a house, Mackay stayed for some months in Asha and Snijders' home. This way, the Christian Hillside School became a hearth of innovation.

In 1975, the classroom buildings were ready. The school could become a 'real school'. Job advertisements for a Principal with experience were placed in newspapers in the Netherlands. Warntjes reacted and started his term as principal that same year.

When we asked Asha whether the distinction between public and confessional education had been enforced from the Netherlands, she replied very firmly: 'It was definitely not forced. It was a need of the community. Just as we started, some Methodists came too. They had a congregation and they could have their own (school). (…) It became a trend. It was a need. I have never had any feeling that Holland had anything to do with it. I know this because of the struggles. If Holland had wanted this, they would have helped us. But there was no help from anywhere. The Island Government did not see the need of it, because if you don't have something, you can't miss it either. Besides, they said: 'We have public schools and Catholic schools. What more do you want?' They didn't see the need', Asha stressed.

Methodist Agogic Center (MAC)

The Methodist Church of St. Maarten needed a primary school for the children of their congregation. For this reason, they requested permission to establish a Methodist school. In February 1976, the permission was granted for three Kindergarten classes and four first

grade classes by the Lt. Governor. However, only in March 1979, the minister issued a 'Declaration of no objection' on the condition that no deviation occurred from the existing legal stipulations with regard to education.

The school was called Methodist Agogic Center ('the MAC') and opted for English as the language of instruction. This had been made possible by the 'Akkoord van Kralendijk'.[286]

Between 1976 and 1990 the MAC had one principal and two vice-principals. There was also an Executive Office, which was led by an Executive Director, an Executive Team and four Administrative Assistants.

In 1990-1991, two more campuses were built, resulting in MAC 1 in St John's Estate (10 January 2006), St. John, MAC 2 (also known as Rev. John Gumbs School) in Betty's Estate, and MAC 3 on Sr. Modesta Road, in the Backstreet area, in Simpsonbay.

One of our interviewees, Clinton Spring, who worked at MAC in St. Peter as teacher (1983), researcher (1996) and executive director (2000), told us that the school's educational philosophy was summed up by the motto: 'The love of Christ constrains us'.

Seventh-Day Adventist School

The Seventh-Day Adventist School was a latecomer in the area of non-Catholic Christian education. Before its foundation in 1995, the Seventh-Day Adventist children attended public schools, the Christian Hillside School or the MAC.

When the decision was taken to found an Adventist school, people opted to start with Grades One, Two and Three 'not to pinch students from other schools,' as Lake told us. The intention was to create the school's own student population from scratch. Moreover, many of the initial 100-125 pupils were out-of-school children or children that had just arrived on the island. The language of instruction would be English.

As was the case with the Christian Hillside School, the founders of the Seventh-Day Adventist School knew very well what kind of school they intended to establish on the Island. The idea was to get Adventist children started in St. Maarten and, when applicable,

286 *Akwerdo di Kralendijk. Un declaracion di principio. - Het akkoord van Kralendijk. Een beginselverklaring,* (1970).

to prepare them for further studies in the USA at Seventh-Day Adventist colleges and universities. This vision was reflected in the profile of the teachers, whom the school wished to employ: Seventh-Day Adventists.

Until the present, the school has had only one Principal, namely, Lake. She worked in collaboration with the School Board, which was filled by people from the church. There are also two Trustees, who are empowered to sign papers in the name of the Head Officers for the North Caribbean, seated on the island of St. Croix.

At first, pupils walked to and from school, since there was no school bus. Neither was there a library bus, therefore, Streefkerk often gave his pupils a lift to the library in his own car.[287]

General considerations

When we consider the three non-Catholic, Christian schools together, we can pinpoint some commonalities between them. They emerged as bottom-up initiatives. They were essentially religiously motivated. From the outset, they all opted for English as the language of instruction.

THE EMERGENCE OF ALTERNATIVE OR PRIVATE SCHOOLS

In the 1990s, the Island saw the beginning of the fourth phase of the development of its educational system. This new strand was characterized by the foundation of alternative or private schools, e.g. the Montessori School (1993), the International School of St Maarten[288] (1995), and the Caribbean International Academy[289] (2003), respectively.

287 Interview with Pieter Streefkerk.

288 In Oyster Pond.

289 See: http://www.international-schoolfriends.com/schools-_Caribbean_International_Academy-Sint_Maarten-Netherlands_Antilles-10921-show.html. (Accessed on 3 February 2010).

Montessori School [290]

The Maarten Montessori School was officially opened in August 1993. It was founded by Andrew and Huguette Erato. Like Asha and Snijders, the Eratos wished to have their daughters educated according to their personal preference, namely the Montessori Method.

Since the Montessori Method requires special training, the school organized a training program in 2005, under the direction of Janice Mayhew. This became an accredited AMS (American Montessori Society) course held at the school and coordinated by Madalaine Patzalek.

The Montessori School was accredited under MSAC (Montessori Schools Accreditation Council) in 2008. Furthermore, the school is also an International member of AMS.

International School of St Maarten [291]

The International School of St. Maarten was established as a foundation in 1995. It started as an initiative of parents, who desired a traditional academic program for their children.

This school, which is in Oyster Pond, is an independent college-oriented day school. It combines online courses and classroom instruction for grades 6 through 12.

Learning Unlimited School[292]

The Learning Unlimited Preparatory School (LUPS) started in the fall of 1991. When starting this establishment was a satellite branch of Learning Unlimited International Schools, founded in 1976, by Dr. Pouneh and Bill Alcott, in Columbus, Ohio. However, now it is an independent, non-sectarian, co-educational preparatory school serving students grades preschool through 12. The school has complied with St. Maarten government and the island's Ministry of Education requirements. In addition, the school benefits from government protection, including the police and fire departments. Learning Unlimited

290 http://www.montessorisxm.com/. (Accessed on 3 February 2010).

291 In Oyster Pond.

292 See: http://www.learningunlimitedschool.com/. (Accessed on 3 February 2010).

Preparatory School is founded on the principle of developing each student's potential to the fullest within a safe, positive, and academically challenging environment.

Caribbean International Academy [293]

Both the Montessori School (1993) and the Caribbean International Academy (2003) were founded by the same owners, namely, Andrew and Huguette Erato.

The Caribbean International Academy is located in the Dutch Lowlands. It implements the Canadian curriculum. Its current principal is Tom Brownhill.

General considerations

Even though these schools represent a new development, they have remained marginal. Only a certain segment of the population can afford to send their children there or want their children to be educated, according to a particular method or curriculum (e.g. parents who intend eventually to send their children to Canada or the USA for further studies).

THE EMERGENCE OF 'REMEDIAL' INITIATIVES

In 2003, the foundation of the first 'Undocumented School' ushered in the fifth phase in the history of education in St. Maarten. In the present period, two main phenomena have come to the fore. On the one hand, there are the 'Undocumented Schools,' which correlate to the arrival of new immigrants, and, on the other hand, there are an increasing number of support organizations, which seek to scaffold the learning process. Both phenomena show that education has moved beyond the basic needs of average children and has started to pay attention to special cases.

As stated at the beginning of this dissertation, the current research project only covers the period between 1953 and 2000. Nevertheless, we will briefly mention the 'Undocumented Schools', because they reveal some important structural changes in the life of the Island. As indicated, the political landscape of St. Maarten -- and a good deal of the infrastructural shortcomings on the island in 1953 and later-- had to do with the political

293 See: http://www.international-schoolfriends.com/schools-_Caribbean_International_Academy-Sint_Maarten-Netherlands_Antilles-10921-show.html. (Accessed on 3 February 2010).

agendas[295] of Curaçao (the main political player in the Netherlands Antilles) and the Netherlands (the colonial motherland). Once the situation began to change in the last decennia, the destiny of the Island gradually came to be in the hands of the local government.

The 'Undocumented Schools' are, therefore, symptomatic of local societal processes and negotiations on the level of *l'imaginaire collectif.* This self-consciousness of both individuals and society as a whole points to elements that will condition not only the future education policies of the now autonomous government of St. Maarten, but also the content of parts of the curriculum of official education.

All Children's Education Foundation (ACE)

There are a number of schools which are called 'undocumented' because of the 'type' of children they accept. It is within this 'undocumented' framework that the 'All Children's Education Foundation' (ACE) operates. This movement is spearheaded by Claire Elshot, an educator and out-spoken trade unionist in St. Maarten.

In contrast to subsidized schools, the 'undocumented' schools do not require candidate pupils have valid civil documents; in the words of Elshot: '(…) a child must be a child and that is enough. Even children born on the Island, but who lack the due documents are excluded within the official [read: subsidized] system.'

There are different reasons why children may be classified as 'undocumented'. In some cases, they are the children of illegal immigrants.[296] In other cases[297], they may still be

295 Maybe because of the absence of any real plan for the Antilles as a whole due to a lack of Dutch interest in the Kingdom's Antillean territories.

296 This development took place over against the backdrop of (1) heightened nationalistic sentiments among some segments of the population who see themselves as the defenders of the Island's true heritage and (2) the fact that the majority of inhabitants are 'foreigners' (especially from the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica, but also from Guyana, Suriname, China and India).

297 Guadeloupe discusses this also in "the illegal workers" and speaks of "the unspoken rule" in this society where a lot of "things" are accepted by the government. Guadeloupe, F. (2005). *Chanting Down the New Jerusalem*, pp. 26-29.

waiting for their documents to be issued at the time of school enrollment. If parents, including European Dutch citizens, move to the Island outside the registration period, their children cannot be enrolled in subsidized schools. They can only go to expensive private schools. This is what happened to Elshot's pupils. She had been working in Curaçao and then tried to register her children in St. Maarten during the Carnival break. 'At first, the director did not want to register my children, because it was not the right period. In the end, she did,' said Elshot.

During our interview, it became clear that the very existence of 'Undocumented Schools' represents a clash of concerns. On the one hand, there is the government with its immigration laws and procedures and, on the other hand, there are the UNESCO ideals of 'Education for All' (EFA). While some may view 'Undocumented Schools' as condoning illegality, those supporting them see themselves as preventing children from losing one or more years of formal education. They endorse EFA —'because the government does not adhere to the UNESCO's ideals,' Elshot explained.

Elshot started with the first 'Undocumented School' or class in her office in September 2003. Then, she acquired a place on Scott Road, where Grades 1 to 7 were housed. At this moment, grades 4 and 6 are at the Elvis Scott Road and grades 3 and 7 are in Cole Bay. The pupils take a bus or shuttle when needed.

The salaries are paid from the school fees. When parents cannot afford that, the school looks for money elsewhere. The school fees increased from 75 $ to 85 US$ a month. This pays the salaries and the rent of the buildings.

Each time that the government showed an interest in the school and hinted at cooperation, the condition was that the school had to produce a list of pupils. The second implicit demand would then be that the children produce the required documents, which they would not be able to do. As long as the school keeps on refusing to comply with the first request, subsidies will continue to be denied.

Elshot told us that she once asked the Salvation Army and the Cole Bay Community Center whether they could house grade 7 (29 students), but they declined, apparently because there were Haitian children.

There seems to be a *don't ask-don't tell* relationship between the 'Undocumented Schools' and the education authorities. Although the previous Lieutenant Governor allegedly said that there would be no room for undocumented children in subsidized schools, the government has tolerated Elshot's schools, probably because she has showed herself ready to take up the issue with the United Nations and UNESCO.

Elshot prefers to describe schools like hers as 'non-subsidized' or, better still, NGOs. At present, there seems to be more than six of these types of schools, which indicates that should the government welcome all of these children into subsidized schools, it would have to build at least two new schools to house them.

PARTIAL CONCLUSIONS

As we look at the developments in both the foreground and background of St. Maarten education, we can also trace some constants.

The growth of the educational landscape

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Island saw an increase in the number of immigrants from Haiti and the Dominican Republic, who came to work in the tourism industry. This demographic change had an impact on the school population. Since most of the pupils spoke neither English nor Dutch, the educational system had to face the language issue once again. However, we must not assume that all the newcomers resisted Dutch as the main language of instruction. Our interviewees explained that often the opposite was true. Some foreign parents perceived Dutch as a springboard to an educational future for their children in the Netherlands, which would cost them less than in the USA or Canada.

The influence of international political, cultural or ideological variables has always been felt, albeit in varying degrees. Whether it was the Dutch colonial policy, the churches or private institutions, St. Maarten has always been influenced by discourses initiated and conducted elsewhere. Even during periods when local concerns were being addressed, the projects that were set up cannot be said to have been spearheaded exclusively by 'native' St. Maarteners. For instance, Asha (a Surinamese), Snijders (a European Dutch) and Mackay (a Brit) played key roles in the incipient Christian Hillside School. The Seventh-Day Adventist

School's sense of international belonging and roots were probably as strong, or even stronger, as Catholic schools that did not really have a marked international consciousness of being a part of a worldwide Catholic educational system.

Nonetheless, we would not describe this essentially international and global connection and tendency as being un-Caribbean. This is fully in keeping with the fact that 'native' is a 'foreign' concept in the Caribbean context. If we were to consider the pre-Columbian peoples as the 'native' inhabitants of the region, then, we would have to say that the region is essentially made up of foreigners. St. Maarten and the Caribbean as a whole are essentially *creole.298* Initially, these societies were forcefully engineered by the old colonial powers. They were subsequently enriched with several waves of Caribbean and non-Caribbean immigrants, who joined the islands in de-centered networks of families and friends. During the last century, the region was deeply influenced by the culture and needs of tourism. The Caribbean diaspora has played its role, too. St. Maarteners that studied overseas (e.g. Curaçao, Aruba, the Netherlands and the USA) went back to the Island carrying the educational background that was acquired abroad. Furthermore, we cannot forget that these same St. Maarteners have often been shaken to their foundations by adverse forces of nature (by hurricanes in the case of St. Maarten and by earthquakes in the case of Haiti). The educational system in the Caribbean has also been affected by the abovementioned factors. In fact, their curricula and organizational structures have often followed the dominant currents in American, British, French or Dutch school systems.

As some of our interviewees told us, the arrival of cable TV, in 1986, not only heightened the influence of foreign trends on the adult population of the Island, but also on the behavior of pupils and the relationship between parents and schools.

Finally, if our reading of the events is correct, the period between 1953 and 2000 saw a growth in consciousness and self-appropriation among the people of St. Maarten. As the Island developed demographically and economically, the education system expanded. It is also our impression that the Antillean diaspora has enhanced the movement towards autonomy, which culminated with the end of the Netherlands Antilles and the beginning of

298 This concept is already explained in part 1 of our research. See also Francio Guadeloupe for in-depth discussion on this terminology. Guadeloupe, F. (2005). *Chanting down the New Jerusalem.*

the Kingdom of the Netherlands as a union of four countries (the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and St. Maarten) and Public Bodies or Special Municipalities of the Netherlands (namely Bonaire, Saba and St. Eustatius).

Religion and schooling

Even though the more established Catholic and Methodist schools started as religiously motivated endeavors, their strictly confessional dimension has become increasingly less prominent throughout the years. Despite the fact that Catholic schools have always made room for catechetical instruction, early on, religious education was given from a perspective of civics ('Maatschappijleer'). That was true even while Sr. Constance and Sr. Marie Laurence were active in education on the Island; for Catholic educators have always known that not all pupils in a Catholic school are Catholic.

At present, one could say that although St Dominic has a Catholic flavor and the MAC is Protestant, faith is no longer the *raison d'être* why principals, teachers and Board of Trustees members are committed to their school. "The reasons why people choose one school rather than another seem to be of a practical nature. It has been noted that the attraction to a certain school very often is determined by the location, the school discipline and of course the quality of education. The question what the determining factors is: good education or Catholic education".[299] Robertina[300] sees this exemplified in the case of Milton Peters' College, SVOBE, St. Maarten Academy and St Dominic's High School. Regardless of their original ideological background, they all behave as if they were non-confessional schools. Furthermore, some would argue that religious affiliation seems to have been reduced to being a bureaucratic tool for denying admission to certain students. This might not necessarily apply to the (Evangelical) Christian Hillside School or the Seventh-Day

299 Hart, J. (1992) 150 jaar Rooms Katholiek Onderwijs op de Nederlandse Antillen: Een gedenkboek ter herinnering aan de komst der Zusters 150 jaar geleden op de Nederlandse Antillen. Scherpenheuvel: Drukkerij Imprenta, p. 87. De aantrekkingskracht van een school wordt bepaald door de ligging in de wijk, de verkeerssituatie, traditie binnen de familie, een school met duidelijke tucht, maar een doorslaggevende factor is wel de kwaliteit van het onderwijs. Men kan de vraag stellen: Wat kiezen de ouders, nu eigenlijk, goed onderwijs of katholiek onderwijs

300 Interview with Gwen Robertina.

Adventist Schools, which have remained confessional in terms of their pedagogical inspiration.

There was a time when the impression was given that those who could not succeed in Catholic schools were doomed to attend public schools. Nowadays, there are schools that have both stronger and weaker results across the board. In fact, it is more recent, non-affiliated schools (e.g. Montessori School) that appear to be for the more affluent few.

Robertina described the current differences between schools as one between the 'inside' and the 'outside'. 'Inside schools' are those in the hands of the government, while 'outside schools,' are those subsidized by the government, but in the hands of non-governmental foundations. Furthermore, Robertina suggested that 'you will see that elsewhere in the world, private schools that receive funding from the government are more elitist.'

Historically, subsidies became equal for all schools only in 1946.[301] Despite this equalization, by 1957, the subsidy per student was 272.47 guilders in special education over against 404.03 guilders per student in public education per year.[302] This amount might have been applicable only to the Leeward Islands since the 1960 report for the Windward Islands indicated that the yearly subsidy for a student was 16 guilders and 20 guilders per classroom a month.[303]

In the next section, we shall turn our attention to the issue of the language of instruction, which has been more problematic than religion throughout the years.

301 "Tenslotte werd op 8 maart 1946 door de Staten van Curaçao een subsidieverordering voor bijzonder onderwijs aangenomen waarin het in alle opzichten gelijk gesteld werk aan het openbaar onderwijs. Er werden vergoedingen geschonken voor afgestane ruimten, voor klaslokalen, en er kwam een betere salariëring voor de vierde-rangers,". See Hart, J. (1992). *150 jaar Rooms Katholiek Onderwijs op de Nederlandse Antillen, p.* 57.

302 Idem, p. 57.

303 *Het onderwijs in de Nederlandse Antillen: verslag over het jaar 1960.* Departement van Onderwijs, p. 14.

THE LANGUAGE DISCUSSION: THE DIFFICULTIES WITH BI-LINGUAL EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

As noted, St. Maarten is a 'Caribbean' island. This implies several things. For example, we are talking about an essentially mixed and cross-cultural environment. People have come and gone from the region throughout the centuries. While some came in search of a better future, others merely wished to colonize it and exploit its resources. Nowadays, most visitors simply want 'to sunbathe and chill'. Even though all these people have not influenced the Island in the same way, when we look at the *longue durée* (Braudel), we can see patterns of influence. One of the variables that are symptomatic of the international impact on the Island is language and, more particularly, the language of instruction. That is why in this chapter, we shall turn our attention to the language question in educational discussions and practices. However, before we lay out the chronological development of educational practice in St. Maarten in relation to the language of instruction, we must first speak of its context.

COMPLEX CONTEXT

The first element that must be borne in mind is that between 1954 and 2000, the Island of St. Maarten (NL)/Saint Martin (FR) found itself in a sea of political ambivalence and unequal relations. It was a post-colonial construct that had been engineered to redress the colonial past, but which could not be rectified overnight or by royal decree.

As explained in previous chapters, in 1954, St. Maarten was part of a federal, insular country (the Netherlands Antilles) within a composite constitutional structure called 'the Kingdom of the Netherlands' (made up of the Netherlands, Suriname, the Netherlands Antilles and, later on, Aruba). All these variables gave rise to a complex constitutional situation and a multi-tiered political hierarchy which, when combined with the demographics of the Caribbean, help to explain why the efforts to draw up a consistent and long-term language policy for St. Maarten was a challenge in itself.

Language laws

N.A. language of instr.

STATEN VAN DE NEDERLANDSE ANTILLEN
Zitting 1994-1995

Landsverordening van de
houdende vaststelling van de officiële talen
(Landsverordening officiële talen)

ONTWERP

No. 2

IN NAAM DER KONINGIN!

DE GOUVERNEUR van de Nederlandse Antillen,

In overweging genomen hebbende:
dat het in het kader van het streven naar een gelijkwaardige positie van het Engels, het Nederlands en het Papiamentu wenselijk is aan deze talen een officiële status te verlenen en het gebruik van die talen door de overheid in haar communicatie met de burgers te regelen;

Heeft, de Raad van Advies gehoord, met gemeen overleg der Staten, vastgesteld onderstaande landsverordening:

Artikel 1

In deze landsverordening wordt verstaan onder:
a. overheid:
   1° het Land;
   2° de eilandgebieden;
   3° bij landsbesluit, houdende algemene maatregelen, aangewezen:
      - publiekrechtelijke instellingen;
      - naamloze vennootschappen en stichtingen waarin het Land of een of meer eilandgebieden, al dan niet te zamen, direct of indirect overwegende zeggenschap heeft;
b. ingezetenen: inwoners van de Nederlandse Antillen en hier te lande gevestigde rechtspersonen die niet tot de overheid behoren.

Artikel 2

De officiële talen zijn het Engels, het Nederlands en het Papiamentu.

Artikel 3

1. In de schriftelijke en mondelinge communicatie met ingezetenen bedient de overheid zich van een officiële taal.
2. Indien door een ingezetene een voorkeur voor een officiële taal kenbaar is gemaakt, bedient de overheid zich voor zover mogelijk van die taal. Indien de overheid zich niet van die taal bedient, wordt zulks gemotiveerd.
3. Indien schriftelijke communicatie een beschikking inhoudt of belangrijke rechtsgevolgen kan hebben, is het tweede lid niet van toepassing.

COMPLEX LINGUISTIC REALITY

Although newcomers on the Island brought along their own languages, they did not all shape the linguistic landscape in the same way. Language use in education implies that there are sufficiently large groups of speakers with which one can reckon. Language policies presuppose a certain amount of power, both social and political, that allows a particular language to cross the domestic threshold into the political arena. In this respect, Martha Dijkhoff pointed out that 'there is a geographical limitation to the languages spoken at home by most of its population: English on the Windward Islands and Papiamentu on the

Leeward Islands.304 The languages spoken at home have a different status and are granted a different amount of social recognition in society. Dutch is the language of instruction in most schools, an important language of communication for government, and for written and business communication, whereas it is also the language of communication within the kingdom.'[305]

According to the CBS (2001), the following languages are currently spoken on St. Maarten:

Language	Percentage
English	64.3
Spanish	14.8
French Creole	10.0
Dutch	4.2
Papiamentu	2.3
French	1.7
Chinese	0.4
Portuguese	0.0
Other	1.4
Unknown	0.8
Total	100

The language issue on St. Maarten has always been a puzzling one. Will Johnson words it admirably when he says: 'What divides us most and makes us a strange peculiarity in the history of the Dutch Kingdom is the fact that we have always been and still are an English speaking people. Throughout the centuries Dutch historians, administrators and religious leaders have all lamented the fact that they could not get us to abandon the English language and to become proper Dutch speaking law abiding citizens. On the contrary well established Dutch families such as the Heyligers, Zeegers, Van Romondts all within a generation became Anglicized. No one could defend our status as an English speaking entity in the Dutch Kingdom, better and with more passion, than the van Romondt's or the Heyligers.'[306]

Even though English is often taken to be the local language of St. Maarten, the current language landscape of the Island is far more complex (see details provided by CBS (2001) in the table on this page). This linguistic complexity did not happen overnight. When the European colonial powers forcefully engineered Caribbean societies —among other things, by introducing enslaved and indentured workers, they created mixed, multi-lingual

304 For more information on the importance of distinguishing between language use in the official setting (schools) and in the informal setting, see Declercq, E., & D'hulst, L. (2010). The fate of a migrant language in Northern France (1880-1914). *International Journal of Multiculturalism, 7*(3), p. 258.

305 Dijkhoff, M. (2004). A Language Policy for St. Martin, in *The Education Summit 2004: An Education Summit for the 21st Century,* pp. 31-43, pp. 33-34.

306 Johnson, W. (1995). The history of the Windward Islands, p. 1.

realities[307] which were a reflection of the composite and syncretistic identity of the inhabitants of the region.[308]

English is the predominant and universal language in St. Maarten, but by no means the only one. Haitian residents speak Creole and French. Colombians, 'Dominicanos' and other Latin American residents speak Spanish. Papiamento is spoken among the Antilleans from Curaçao, Bonaire and Aruba. The Surinamers speak Dutch and Sranantongo. Some Chinese dialects are also commonplace in the Chinese community. Urdu and Hindi are spoken among the Pakistani and Indian population, especially those working in the diamond sector. Beside these linguistic groups, there are also smaller ones, such as Arab-speaking and Italian group.

The position of Dutch in St. Maarten's life is not the same as that of Arabic in North Africa after the arrival of Islam, French in West Africa colonies, English in East Africa, or even Dutch in Surinam. On the Island, between 1954 and 2000, Dutch was considered the official language (used in the government and in some schools), but it has never been the language of daily life -- with the exception of groups such as the European Dutch and Surinamese expats. Dutch has remained a foreign language (probably even among St. Maarteners educated in the Netherlands). Despite what official documents state, most people on the Island have communicated and still do in English.

Still, we must underline that 'English' can refer to different types of 'World Englishes' (a term that has now become commonplace in English linguistics; Kachru, 1992).[309] There is St. Maarten English, other types of Caribbean English (e.g. Jamaican or Guyanese), Received Standard English (spoken mainly by those, who have followed formal education and expats, especially Americans, Brits and Canadians). This means that the language question is still not solved by saying that St. Maarten's real, functional language is English. A. Fleming-Rogers warned that even though English is purported to be the 'national language', it is not the

307 This has been expressed, for instance, by using terms such as *créolité*.

308 In this sense, the Caribbean was a forerunner of what would be called 'the global village'.

309 Kachru, B. (1992). World English's: approaches, issues and resources. In *Language Teaching* 25, pp. 1-14.

mother tongue of the people of the Windward Islands. Their mother tongue is a variant of English.[310]

Elshot expressed this idea during our interview: "Our mother tongue is not Dutch, but it's not English [either]. How will I look at the Dominican child and say: 'Hey Juán, tu madertong is ínglis'? No, that's not right. We don't have a mother tongue. You see, people here and at an international level want to put that jacket to fit on St. Maarten. We have too much diversity to focus on a mother tongue. What we have is our 'commercial language' because that's the language we do business in. Both on the Dutch and French side, people understand English. We have an official language and that is Dutch[311]". In everyday life, St. Maarteners speak a language that is neither Revised Standard English nor Dutch.

CHRONOLOGICAL OVERVIEW OF THE LANGUAGE PENDULUM IN EDUCATION

The legal framework

The language of instruction in St. Maarten education can be described as a pendulum that sometimes sways towards Dutch and then towards English. The shift between these two languages has been (and still is) a debated topic, even at the language colloquium of all Dutch-speaking parts of the world, namely, The Netherlands, Flanders (Belgium), Suriname, The Dutch Antilles and Aruba. Our research suggests that we can map out this debate on the Island in a number of chronological phases.

Between 1907 and 1935, many rules were made. The discussion concerning the language of instruction and the position of foreign languages in education became an important issue. According to Stanley Lamp, there was a dispute between the Colonial Council and the School Committee. 'The former argued in favor of a position for the mother tongue, while the latter was of the opinion that: "In every part of the colony the knowledge of Dutch comes in the first place. To be able to spread this knowledge everything can be used and anything that is in its disadvantage must be eliminated". Speaking of Papiamentu

310 FLEMING-ROGERS, A. (1990). *The future of English as medium of instruction in the public schools on St. Maarten.* Boston: U.M.I., p. 46.

311 Interview with Claire Elshot.

the School Committee stated: "The existence of the language (Papiamentu) is regrettable, because it impedes the learning of the mother tongue (Dutch) ….that is needed to increase the development and the prosperity of the people".'[313]

With the implementation of the educational law of 1935, Dutch was adopted as the language of instruction throughout the Netherlands Antilles. This caused a problem, because neither the teachers nor the students could really speak the language. Therefore, the law was modified so that children could be educated in English and learn Dutch as a Second Language.[314]

However, in the late nineteen-fifties, there were reasons to modify the law again. Due to their insufficient knowledge of Dutch, students of the Windward Islands were not able to successfully continue their education in the Leeward Islands where Dutch was the language of instruction.[315] Although the stress was laid on Dutch as the language of instruction, once again, the actual school practice did not live up to the ideals in both parts.

The next shift in the language debate took place in the seventies. At that time, attempts were made to introduce Papiamentu in the Leeward Islands and English in the Windward Islands as the languages of instruction.[316] In other words, people sought to reflect the daily linguistic reality of the islands in the classroom. It took quite a long time for this discussion to get underway, but once it did, it led to the adoption of a transitional bilingual system.

It is worth mentioning that during a conference held in the Windward Islands in the 70s, information was presented on the opinion of the people concerning their preference regarding the language of instruction. The majority of the parents did not favor English.[317]

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313 Lamp, S. (2004). The structure and evolution of the education system of the Netherlands Antilles in *The Education Summit 2004: An Education Summit for the 21st Century.* Sint Maarten, pp. 6-31, p. 9.

314 Fleming-Rogers, A. (1990), p. 3.

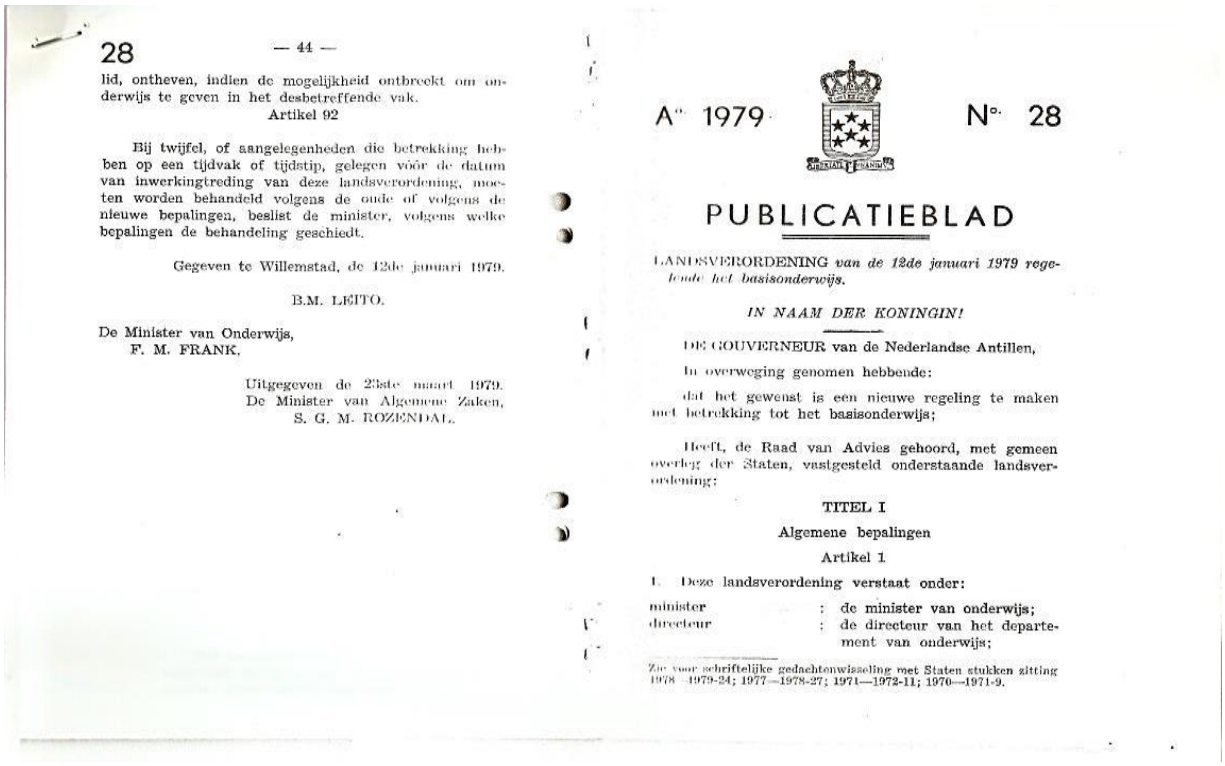
315 Cfr. Wattman, F. (1974). Language and education in the Leeward Netherlands Antilles, in *Caribbean Studies* (13: 3), pp. 111-117.

316 Fleming-Rogers, A. (1990), p. 3.

317 Idem, p. 3

One of the main influences in the transitional bilingual system was a pilot project in the Windward Islands that had been implemented in 1973/74. In this project, English would become the language of instruction for Kindergarten and the first grades of the elementary schools.[318] We also cannot underestimate the influence of David MacKay (from the UK) in St. Maarten who brought his method *Breakthrough to Literacy* to the Island. Due to the importance of his project, we shall deal with it in more detail below.

In 1979, a Federal Decree ratified that the implementation of the transitional bilingual system should only take place once the necessary preparations had been made (see *Publicatieblad* 1979, 28).



28 — 44 —

lid, ontheven, indien de mogelijkheid ontbreekt om onderwijs te geven in het desbetreffende vak.

Artikel 92

Bij twijfel, of aangelegenheden die betrekking hebben op een tijdvak of tijdstip, gelegen vóór de datum van inwerkingtreding van deze landsverordening, moeten worden behandeld volgens de oude of volgens de nieuwe bepalingen, beslist de minister, volgens welke bepalingen de behandeling geschiedt.

Gegeven te Willemstad, de 12de januari 1979.

B.M. LEITO.

De Minister van Onderwijs,
F. M. FRANK.

Uitgegeven de 23ste maart 1979.
De Minister van Algemene Zaken,
S. G. M. ROZENDAL.

A° 1979 N° 28

PUBLICATIEBLAD

LANDSVERORDENING *van de 12de januari 1979 regelende het basisonderwijs.*

IN NAAM DER KONINGIN!

DE GOUVERNEUR van de Nederlandse Antillen,

In overweging genomen hebbende:

dat het gewenst is een nieuwe regeling te maken met betrekking tot het basisonderwijs;

Heeft, de Raad van Advies gehoord, met gemeen overleg der Staten, vastgesteld onderstaande landsverordening:

TITEL I

Algemene bepalingen

Artikel 1

1. Deze landsverordening verstaat onder:

minister : de minister van onderwijs;
directeur : de directeur van het departement van onderwijs;

Zie voor schriftelijke gedachtenwisseling met Staten stukken zitting 1978—1979-24; 1977—1978-27; 1971—1972-11; 1970—1971-9.

In 1986, the arrival of a new Minister of Education —Richardson—brought along changes. She believed in mother-tongue education, especially at the elementary level. A protocol of Cooperation was signed to ensure that English would be implemented as the language of instruction in schools. This protocol was declared official policy in 1987.[319] Our interviews seem to indicate that the average resident on St. Maarten had practical and emotional motives to not be completely behind this decision.

318 Idem, p. 4.

319 See the protocol in appendix 3.

At the practical level, parents were concerned with their children's further education. Seventh-Day Adventist children, who 'can go from Kindergarten to PhD and study all the way through in English and in [North-American] Adventists institutions,' went for English-medium schools.[320] For other children, who could not (and still cannot) afford education in the USA or Canada nor would have the chance to do so (e.g. by means of a scholarship), Dutch remained the preferred option. The Dutch language was seen as a ticket to affordable tertiary education either in Curaçao or the Netherlands. A similar scenario was observed in Curaçao, where some feared that turning their back on Dutch would put their children in a disadvantageous position if they decided to continue their studies in The Netherlands, for which Dutch was essential.[321]At the emotional level, others felt that since they were (and still are) Dutch nationals, they had some responsibility towards the Dutch language.

The language of instruction continued to be a debated issue on two accounts: (1) it called for much effort on the part of schools, teachers and students and (2) the results were poor. On the one hand, it was difficult to find Dutch-speaking teachers and teaching materials that were relevant to the Island. Furthermore, the lack of real-life situations for using Dutch at an advanced level on the Island did little to motivate the students to attempt to master the language. On the other hand, people were aware that although most of those educated in St. Maarten had undergone language education for many years, they could still not function adequately in either language (English or Dutch) in contexts where formal register, accuracy and correctness were required.[322]

The people mentioned above were disadvantaged both in the labor market and in higher education: neither their English nor their Dutch was on a par with that of students educated in the USA or the Netherlands respectively. In fact, their Dutch was often not much better than that of foreigners who had never been in contact with the language before their arrival in the Netherlands. Lourens, too, underlined that students taught in Dutch in St. Maarten would end up 'translating the language all the time, because they do

320 Interview with Marlese Lake.

321 Lamp, S. (2004), p. 13.

322 Dijkhoff, M. (2004), p. 34.

not hear Dutch all the time. It is a foreign language. They end up not being proficient in English and also not in Dutch. And when they go to study in Holland, both types of children have the same problems anyway. They don't know the slang, the accents …, and are stuck.'[323]

DAVID MACKAY AND BREAKTHROUGH TO LITERACY (1972-1974)

The arrival of David MacKay during the 1970s left an indelible mark on the people working in education at the time. He had developed a method called *Breakthrough to Literacy*, which represented a holistic approach to literacy and acknowledged the essential connection between reading and writing. *Breakthrough to Literacy* enabled children to compose their own texts using word tiles from a basic vocabulary and on a magnetic board where the sentences were formed. This active learning provided stimuli for using language in listening, speaking, reading and writing.324 The Christian Hillside School and, in particular, Asha, played a key role in the application of these new ideas, since Mackay boarded at Asha and Snijders' for a while.

Snijders explained during our interview that English was used as the language of instruction in Kindergarten (i.e. two years) and the two following years in elementary school, meaning four years in total.[325] David Mackay was invited to the Island to give workshops. His stay and work were funded by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation. He had an assistant called Joseph Simon, a Spaniard. While MacKay was the coach behind the method, Simon[326] worked on the content of the methodology. According to Snijders, 'David McKay was a very sympathetic man, who could listen very well. Joseph Simon was more agitated, like the Spaniards.' Besides Mackay, Simon and Asha, Whycliff Smith was also very involved in the endeavor. To Snijders, *Breakthrough to Literacy* was *the* answer to teach children how to read. The strength of the method was that it departed from the idea that the sum is

323 Interview with Lourens.

324 Coles, M., Mackay, D. & Hall, C. (1970). *Breakthrough to Literacy*. UK, Longman Schools Division.

325 Interview with Snijders.

326 The collaborator of MacKay

greater than the parts. Children were helped to construct their own book based on their own ideas. Apart from the Christian Hillside School, the Methodist Agogic Center (MAC) also favored the MacKay project as it 'focused on instructing the students in their mother tongue in their early years,' as Harrigan told us.[327]

MacKay's method was well received in St. Maarten. For Hodge, the introduction of *Breakthrough to Literacy* marked the introduction of a child-centered approach to education. In other words, the idea of 'Education for All', with English as the language of instruction from Kindergarten through primary school was finally applied. Children were taught in English and exposed to Dutch. The English years were a transitional period to Dutch, given that in Grade Three the instruction switched from English to Dutch. This was based on MacKay's belief that a child best learned another language when he was 8 or 9 years old.[328]

Harrigan found the experience both positive and influential, but he also saw its flaws. Without undermining the virtues of the method, it was felt that the teachers were not well prepared to apply it and the classes were too chaotic. Indeed, the problem with the MacKay's project seems to have been the lack of structural, contextual and reflective planning. In 1977, when Larmonie arrived in St. Maarten, this was still being felt: 'a reading program was [had been] developed, but there was a lot of confusion'.

Far too much was left to the goodwill of individuals. The same was repeated by Streefkerk,[329] in whose opinion the whole project had been 'too sudden, not really applied in a structured way and there weren't enough books. Some books were bought in Anguilla (for reading), especially for their private library'.

Implementing innovative methods implies change but, as Haddock[330] argued in hindsight during our interview, 'the changes had a lot to do with the person, who was in charge, even in the area of the language of instruction'. He went on to suggest, as did

327 Interview with Harrigan.

328 Interview with Hodge.

329 Interview with Streefkerk.

330 Interview with Haddock.

others, that the innovative intentions were subject to individual initiatives since there was no structural plan and that "bled them to death". Haddock did not blame the Kingdom for the failed attempts, since St. Maarten fell under federal Antillean jurisdiction.

For Harrigan, there were also other flaws related to the implementation of the project: 'the measuring of projects like this was never really carried out. There were rather assumptions about what the true results were instead of looking at the students' outcomes and say: "Hey, we can see that it has had some impacts, but real measuring was lacking.'

The lack of structural planning and implementation became manifest when MacKay was about to go into the third phase of the project. At that moment, teachers protested that they had not been properly coached to make the transition from Dutch to English. However, the situation was not working in Dutch, because even though the teachers went into their classrooms with the intention to teach Dutch, they ended up using English, since the children could not speak Dutch! Despite the legal framework, Dutch was no longer as stressed as it had once been.[331]

Thus, when MacKay left in 1974, the predictable outcome happened: the project collapsed. Once the hub that held together the initiative was no longer in St. Maarten, the lack of structural planning increased and, as Mr. Hodge told us, 'the project started to be watered down. Schools started diverging and doing different things. Sometimes there were parallel Dutch and English classes'.

The situation in primary education in 1977 was as follows: Grades One and Two were English-medium; Grade Three was a transition year from English to Dutch; and from Grade Four onwards, pupils used Dutch as the language of instruction.[332] Personally, Larmonie was in favor of English throughout and Dutch as a Second or Foreign language. For him, and others like him, what was defective was not the language being used at school, but the way in which it was taught. The language policy and school practice 'had to be systematic, with a

331 During our interview, Hodge underlined that 'the Antillean governments said that the language of instruction should be the indigenous language of the people'. The logical conclusion was, therefore, that children in St. Maarten should not be taught in Dutch. Even though he recalls that as a child 'if they caught you using a different language than Dutch, they could punish you for that.' Interview with Hodge.

332 Interview with Larmonie.

strong Dutch component so that secondary students could choose whether to study in the Netherlands or elsewhere'. He pleaded for a realistic approach to Dutch as a Second/Foreign language on the grounds that 'speaking is less important than reading and comprehension'. In the case of English, *Breakthrough to Literacy* revised the philosophy behind the teaching of English reading, but the same was not done with Dutch.

Elshot elaborated further on the critique of how languages were taught, rather than on the languages themselves: 'it is not a language-related failure. We must find out what the real causes are. Even though a Spanish child is born here and brought up here, they can speak Spanish. They learn it though the media, like TV. The same applies to Chinese and Indian students, even though they have never been to China or Hong Kong. We should look at that success models since they succeed in English and Chinese. Those parents teach their children. That is where we are failing: in the teaching. St. Maarten is in a unique situation and has the real good ingredients. You can make a nice rum cake, but you can also ruin it.' And she drew conclusions not only about the past, but also the present. 'The policy makers are failing,' Elshot concluded.

Even though the MacKay initiative did not bear the expected fruit, and finally waned, we were told that, indirectly, it had a positive impact on the mentality of educators on the Island. In the words of Hodge, 'the positive side of the MacKay project was that it helped people to appreciate their own language. MacKay set the basis for any innovation. Learning in your own language makes things easier. Translating from a foreign language to yours and then the other way around, as is done in schools that do not use the first language of the students for instruction, complicates things'.

THE LIVED EXPERIENCE

While discussing the issue of the language of instruction, we must not forget the opinion of the people involved in the implementation of the legal framework.

In 1890, when the Sisters started their mission on St. Maarten, the language of instruction in the schools was English. At that time, only two sisters knew English, but after a while, the others succeeded in learning the language so that they could teach.

In 1933, the situation was radically altered: Dutch lessons were introduced in all the school years. In Grade Four, Dutch would grow until it took over. In Grades 5 and 6, all lessons were to be taught in Dutch.[333] However, for subsidized, special primary schools, the ordinance for education demanded that education be in the Dutch-medium 'as much as possible'.[334] Higher education was in Dutch.

Connor remarked, for instance, that 'Priests, nuns, governors, doctors: they were all Dutch. There were only a few Dutch in St. Maarten (unlike Curaçao). At school, they celebrated Sinterklaas, which was not common on the island.' Milton Peters (later Commissioner) decided that children should learn Dutch from the start.'

Sr. Constance remembered, during our interview that in 1953, in Grades One, Two and Three, they taught arithmetic in English *and* Dutch. Thinking back to when he was a student, Bell[335] recalled that the language of instruction was basically English, although the textbooks were in Dutch. Since most teachers were local (either from St. Maarten or the English-speaking Caribbean), the explanations were in English. Elshot relativized the level of discomfort that the language gap occasioned: 'All the teachers spoke to the children in Dutch. It was difficult in the beginning, but we got used to it. It encouraged you to listen well and sharpen your listening skills'.

In 1963, everything changed to English.[336] Nonetheless, according to the Sisters, there was no indication that the language issue had been settled. The pros and cons of bilingual schools were numerous. But for many people on the Island, it was clear: outside schools, and even within schools, bilingualism was a fact, albeit not officially. And, according to Larmonie, 'nothing was done as if Dutch was going to stay as language of instruction for good. It was known that English would eventually prevail.'

During our interview with the Sisters, Sr. Marie Laurence sketched the scenario in the second half of the 1960s. 'The whole discussion on which language should be used

333 333 Cf. HART, J. (1992). *150 jaar Rooms Katholiek Onderwijs op de Nederlandse Antillen,* p. 44.

334 Idem, p. 47.

335 Interview with Bell.

336 George, M. (2010), p. Catholic education in the Dutch Caribbean, pp. 34-35.

should not be taken lightly. It was a very important issue because they were all going to do their further education in The Netherlands; hence, the students needed to know the Dutch language. But also in the governmental service, English was used, while Dutch was the Kingdom language on St. Maarten and was only spoken when this was needed, i.e. to read the official letters and documents'.[337] It is true that ideally speaking, the Sisters could have promoted the cause of English as language of instruction; yet, as educators, their first concern was to offer the service which was needed. Sr. Constance told us about a meeting that was convened with the students' parents in order to find out their position. The parents in Simpsonbay voted in favor of Dutch mainly because of the ties with the Netherlands (given that they were Dutch nationals) as well as because of the doors that Dutch opened for their children in terms of education and possible government jobs.[338]

From our conversations with Sr. Constance, we learned that she understood that the social status associated with the (colonial) language was an influential factor in the pro-

Maxime Larmonie:

Kerngroep van leerkrachten nodig

DE HEER LARMONIE begeleidt Nederlands als component op de basisschool. Dit doet hij nu al vier jaar. Hierover zegt Larmonie: "Het grootste probleem is niet het Nederlands op de scholen maar h.t grote tekort aan leermiddelen. Er bestaan geen gerichte methodes voor de eerste, tweede en derde klassen van de lagere school. Op het moment zijn onze werkzaamheden vooral geconcentreerd op het aanbieden van leermiddelen". In verband hiermee werden enige tijd geleden twee werkgroepen samengesteld waarin leerkrachten uit deze klassen zitting hadden en die toen voor de tweede klas eenleen-taalmethode hebben samengesteld (de Zevenmijlslaarzen) en voor de derde klas een taalmethode de SSS. Dit geschiedde onder begeleiding van Frater Anton. Beide methodes worden nu al drie jaar met succes gebruikt op de lagere scholen. Momenteel is men bezig deze in boekvorm uit te geven.

Hoe zit het met de taal Nederlands op de lagere scholen hier? Hierover zegt Larmonie het volgende: "Het probleem op de lagere scholen is niet het "vak" Nederlands maar de VOERTAAL Nederlands. De resultaten van het vak Nederlands zijn goed maar er bestaan echter geen duidelijke didactische richtlijnen voor het overschakelen van het Engels naar het Nederlands als voertaal. Deze overschakeling vindt plaats in de derde klas en gebeurt in elke klas verschillend. Feitelijk moet eerst dit onderzocht worden", aldus Larmonie die zelf jarenlang als onderwijzer werkzaam is geweest.

Op Curacao geboren uit Bovenwindse ouders heeft ook hij zijn kweekschool in Nederland gevolgd. Bij zijn terugkeer in 1963 naar Curacao heeft hij enkele jaren op de lagere school gewerkt en later op de Mulo. Hierna is hij negen jaar hoofd geweest van de Marthin Luther Kingschool op Curacao. In 1977 kwam de heer Larmonie naar het PIOS op St. Maarten. Over zijn werk zegt hij "Ik vind het werk interessant. We hebben een goede teamgeest.

PERSPECTIEVEN

"Ik heb vertrouwen in het onderwijs omdat ik groot vertrouwen heb in de schoolhoofden en leerkrachten. Ze zijn zeer gemotiveerd. Als vanuit het Departement hierin goed wordt ingespeeld kan veel bereikt worden. Vaak worden ideeen van leerkrachten hier op het Departement gebruikt. De twee methodes bijvoorbeeld waren niet mogelijk geweest zonder hun hulp. Als in de toekomst gewerkt moet worden aan een nieuw leerplan dan zou dit nooit zonder de hulp van de leerkrachten die de mensen "in the field" zijn, kunnen gebeuren. Vergeleken met 1977 is alles nu veel meer geordend.

Toendertijd was het nogal rommelig, de leerkrachten zaten toen vaker met hun handen in het haar. Er was hier geen instantie waar je met hun problemen naar toe konden. Beslissingen werden op Curacao genomen en men moest daar maar mee zien te werken. De komst van het departement betekende een enorme vooruitgang voor het onderwijs. De onderwijzers hadden toen een uitlaatklep. Onderwijzers moeten over hun vak kunnen praten, zegt Larmonie. Nu hebben ze meer zekerheid en er bestaat een verdeelde verantwoordelijkheid. Ook de komst van de inspecteurs heeft bijgedragen tot verbetering van het onderwijs op de Bovenwinden".

Zijn wens voor de toekomst is antillianisering van het onderwijs. Hierover zegt Larmonie "Met alle respect voor de onderwijzers uit het buitenland geloof ik toch dat we met onze eigen mensen moeten werken. Er moet een kerngroep van eigen leerkrachten gevormd worden waarmee samen met het departemente baanbrekend werk verricht kan worden. Met "eigen mensen" bedoelt Larmonie Antillianen, maar daarmee wil ik absoluut niet zeggen dat de buitenlandse leerkrachten die hier werken niet goed zouden zijn, integendeel ze doen heel goed werk, maar wij kunnen onze eigen mensen beter aanvoelen".

Foto: Maxime Larmonie, begeleider van het Nederlands als component op de basisschool en verbonden aan het departement van onderwijs op de Bovenwinden.

(Amigoe newspaper, 1981)

337 Idem, p. 36. Sr. Marie Lawrence's reply. Own translation from a previous interview with the sisters of Voorschoten.

338 See also *Opvattingen van de bevolking ten aanzien van bevolkinsvraagstukken en bevolkingsgebied: eerste resultaten onderzoek St. Maarten, St. Eustatius en Saba* (1999). Willemstad.

Dutch position.[339] Watson-Richardson, English Language Advisor at the St. Maarten Department of Education, explained the parental position as follows: 'On St. Maarten, Dutch and English have always carried two distinct roles. One empowers to speak, and one corrals. The language system is the great divider. English is the language they speak, but Dutch is the language they are judged by.'[340] Nonetheless, for Sr. Constance the parents' choice had to be respected (whatever their reasons might have been). For those intending to go for further education, there was always a very practical reason to want to be educated in Dutch: 'The dilemma was that because education on Curaçao was in Dutch, a lot of students going to study over there needed to have completed the 8th grade and to take extra Dutch classes in order to attend the 1st year of the General Secondary Education (HBS). Otherwise the students could not get in, unless you are [were] very good like Joe Peterson'.[341]

When we combine the information gained from the Sisters and the witness of other interviewees, we tend to conclude:

St. Maarteners were conscious that Dutch was not their 'mother tongue,' but neither was Standard English. Given that Standard English also felt 'foreign', the status given to Dutch managed to create the impression that the language of the old colonizers could not be done away with too swiftly.

From the above, it appears that the pro-English camp failed to conduct an effective and convincing PR campaign in favor of English as the mandatory, universal language of instruction.

Almost every interview showed that the pragmatic concerns to keep Dutch were perceived to be more important in the eyes of many parents than nationalistic sentiments or their attachment to English (for which they would still have to wait about two decades)[342].

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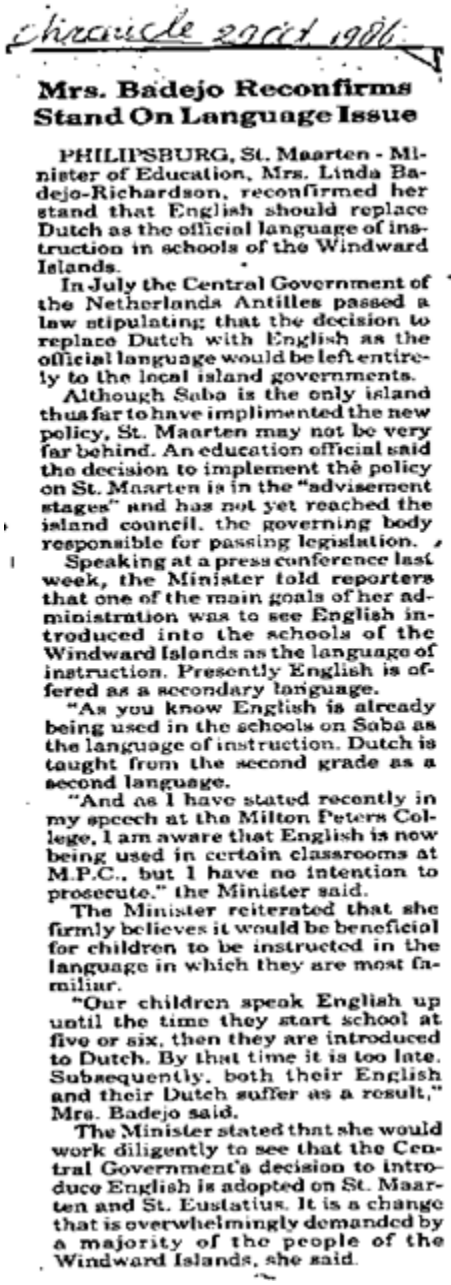
339 Stevens, too, suggested that 'it feels like Dutch is still superior to everything. For, in the long run, it is even cheaper to study in Holland'.

340 Watson-Richardson, L. (1996). *Language in decision: What language policy offers the majority of children the best chances of succes on St. Maarten.* St. Maarten, p. 19.

341 Interview with Stevens.

342 Although not directly related to this research, the experience or shall we say difficult experience of bi-



Chronicle 29 Oct 1986

Mrs. Badejo Reconfirms Stand On Language Issue

PHILIPSBURG, St. Maarten - Minister of Education, Mrs. Linda Badejo-Richardson, reconfirmed her stand that English should replace Dutch as the official language of instruction in schools of the Windward Islands.

In July the Central Government of the Netherlands Antilles passed a law stipulating that the decision to replace Dutch with English as the official language would be left entirely to the local island governments.

Although Saba is the only island thus far to have implimented the new policy, St. Maarten may not be very far behind. An education official said the decision to implement the policy on St. Maarten is in the "advisement stages" and has not yet reached the island council, the governing body responsible for passing legislation.

Speaking at a press conference last week, the Minister told reporters that one of the main goals of her administration was to see English introduced into the schools of the Windward Islands as the language of instruction. Presently English is offered as a secondary language.

"As you know English is already being used in the schools on Saba as the language of instruction. Dutch is taught from the second grade as a second language.

"And as I have stated recently in my speech at the Milton Peters College, I am aware that English is now being used in certain classrooms at M.P.C., but I have no intention to prosecute," the Minister said.

The Minister reiterated that she firmly believes it would be beneficial for children to be instructed in the language in which they are most familiar.

"Our children speak English up until the time they start school at five or six, then they are introduced to Dutch. By that time it is too late. Subsequently, both their English and their Dutch suffer as a result," Mrs. Badejo said.

The Minister stated that she would work diligently to see that the Central Government's decision to introduce English is adopted on St. Maarten and St. Eustatius. It is a change that is overwhelmingly demanded by a majority of the people of the Windward Islands, she said.

St. Maarten's society was not ready yet to evolve from being a survival economy (typical of colonial territories, which are not self-ruled and still lack both a local intellectual echelon as well as an influential, local commercial class) to being a (partially, though meaningfully) self-regulated economy. People were satisfied with being able to find a job and educate their children, but they lacked the political will to claim the reigns of their destiny. Nor did they seem yet to have a financial vision for St. Maarten.

The 1970s was a time of change. English schools came into existence and the student population attending English-medium schools grew and eventually outnumbered those attending Dutch-medium schools.

The problem during the period of language instruction transition was that, according to the Sisters, the interest of the students for Dutch had deteriorated because the lessons given in English in Grade One and Two were repeated in Dutch in Grade Three. This awkward and meaningless situation led some schools to opt for English as the only language of instruction and

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lingual education in St. Maarten could be a rich source for understanding the pros and cons of bi-lingual education in general. In Europe and Asia, there is a growing trend to implement so-called bi-lingual education in both primary and second schools. The experience of St. Maarten raises questions of its effectiveness and its sustainability (i.e. the need of qualified teachers, student and parental motivation, but also funds). Furthermore, there continues to be an upward trend in the proliferation of private English language education: both American and British schools. In some schools, over 60% of the student population is native, i.e. non-native speakers. The reason being that parents believe that being able to speak English well will give their children certain advantages later and provide them access to universities in the United Kingdom or the USA. The St. Maarten experience shows that although it is a good theory in practice, sometimes the results are not what the parents except or desire. This research is also a rich resource for those looking into those questions as well as students of linguistics.

other schools for Dutch. Students who preferred English went to the St. Maarten Academy, where Dutch was only a subject.

Apart from this reason, at the time, the increase of students going for English-medium education was also influenced by the enormous amount of immigrants to St. Maarten from the English-speaking Caribbean in search of employment. Thus, even though Dutch remained the official language, Caribbean English became reinforced as the real everyday language in St. Maarten.

During this transition period, the lack of clear direction on the part of the federal government gave schools room to experiment with language. Larmonie, who was an inspector at the time, revealed that 'On the one hand, he had to implement Federal policy. On the other hand, he tolerated developments towards English as language of instruction (e.g. at MAC).' Once thing was clear, namely that 'the transition was not clear.' Some schools started using Dutch at the beginning of Grade 3, while others preferred to do it half way through, and others at the end.'

Dutch was experienced as a passive language, since a real-life context for its teaching was missing. Robertina[343] noticed when teaching that 'students were forced to learn in a language that was not reinforced in their daily lives. De Weever confirmed this, saying that 'you did not really speak a lot' of Dutch at school. In her case, she mostly 'learned Dutch among the Dutch and Surinamese in St. Maarten'.[344] For Lourens, it was logical that students could not master Dutch, 'unless you are being bombarded all day with Dutch, it is very difficult for you to express yourself sufficiently in Dutch. Children do watch Dutch television. Their key figures –their play figures— (Batman and so on) are not Dutch.'[345]

In 1986, the then minister of education signed a protocol that each island territory could determine the language of instruction in elementary education. At that time, Saba decided to go completely for English as the language of instruction. In St. Maarten, where the MAC had already started with English education, increasingly more schools switched to English as the language of instruction.

343 Interview with Robertina.

344 Interview with De Weever.

345 Interview with Lourense.

Towards 2000, Robertina indicated that the reasons in favor of Dutch were (and continue to be) practical rather than ideological. 'When you look at the reasons why people want Dutch to be the language of instruction, you will see that it is because parents do not have the means to send their children to college or university in the USA. If their children speak Dutch well enough, they can flow into the Dutch system where they are eligible for the Dutch study financing.'[346] Snijders, too, spoke of the added-value of Dutch as the language of instruction. When students want to continue their education, 'higher education in Holland is one third of what it costs in the USA. Holland also has an obligation to make room for the children we send. For instance, my daughter, she did medicine there. Holland ensures them a place. After that, our students have to prove themselves in their studies.' Buncamper mentioned similar factors. This trend of thought could be summed up in Haddock's words: 'The language issue, I don't consider it an issue anymore. It has been discussed so often. If you want your child to study, Holland is far cheaper.'

In Europe, we may not think much of the parents' practical considerations to adopt a foreign language as language of instruction, however, people, who are aware of the limitations living on a small island brings, do not take pragmatic reasons lightly. Haddock voiced this very clearly: 'I've always believed that we are born Dutch. There are also many children, who cannot follow the Dutch stream. I think people should be given a choice. You will always have kids who are not good in something. No matter what you do, you don't want to lose that Dutch passport. With that passport you can go anywhere in the world without hassle. You can jump in a plane and go to USA. We are aware of the problems Jamaicans and *Dominicanos* have. No matter what they tell you—yes, you want to have a lot of freedom—but when you become a little island, you are nothing. The world is growing together. The problem is that the government has chosen English, but they have not changed the system.'

As Robertina pointed out, however, recognizing the parental right to use language as a criterion for choosing their children's school does not bring the debate on the language of instruction to a close. Hence, she asks: 'Is there a need to have so many schools with Dutch as the language of instruction?'

346 Interview with Robertina.

Snijders suggested that a compromise could be found. For him, education should be in English, but as long as St. Maarten is 'part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, people should be able to speak Dutch, but not some archaic language. It should be at a level that is practical and functional. In Holland, there are so many good Dutch courses and nice programs for non-Dutch speakers. There are so many ways we can get book quality for those who want to learn Dutch.' Lourens also thinks along the same lines: 'I have the example of my own children. They went to English language schools and are in Holland doing courses. They need functional Dutch for everyday'.

The language debate is, therefore, not yet closed. As Lourens put it, there are some people on the Island who say, 'I've made it in the Dutch system,' whereas others reply that 'In Holland, everybody wants to learn English, because they understand that it is the global way of communication. It's the language of business and commerce. Besides, a person who is unable to express him or herself in the language that is closest to his or her heart is a person that is curtailed by the language. Language is something very emotional. If you cut your finger, your first reaction will be in your first language. The other day, I remarked that my husband, who is from Curaçao and whose mother tongue is Papiamento, that once or twice he's passed out, and the language that he speaks when he comes back is Papiamento. That is the language that is in his psyche'.

ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION IN ST. MAARTEN

As suggested by Dijkhoff, a language of instruction policy in St. Maarten ought to be worked out and justified from different angles.[347] We shall now zoom into some of the elements implicit in the overview discussed above and our interviews, namely: Policy, focus on the language user in school, language teaching itself, the relationship between the language of instruction and identity, vision for the future.

347 Dijkhoff, M. (2004), p. 36.

Policy

Language policies, planning, implementation and evaluation between 1954 and 2000 had Island, federal and kingdom dimensions. Even though all these domains had their own jurisdictions, a certain degree of collaboration was needed between them. As Dijkhoff put it,

> any language policy in St. Martin 'needs to formulate the St. Martin's perspective on these levels and the necessary regulations, tasks and procedures that need to be in place. This is because they influence each other in rather complex ways by either creating problems and being obstructive or by being aligned and creating opportunities for synchronized actions'.[348]

Looking at the figures on how many people can actually use Dutch in their daily life, we could conclude that the Kingdom of the Netherlands has never had a strong language policy in the Netherlands Antilles. Fleming-Rogers already argued in her dissertation that the Dutch language was only used by 4.5% of the Antillean population between the ages of 0 and 24 years.[349] Since she focused on another aspect of language policy, she concluded that the Antillean school system was an elitist one, since: 'Only a minority of the children for whom Dutch is the mother tongue is able to benefit from having Dutch as the language of instruction in the school system'.[350]

It is worth noting at this juncture that despite the Kingdom's apparent absence of interest in St. Maarten and the lack of real-life situations in which Dutch was actually needed, Dutch was still given a major role in education. We suspect that this was due to arguments coming from the Netherlands Antilles rather than from the Kingdom. St. Maarteners, together with the people of Saba and St. Eustatius, belonged to the English-speaking minority within the Netherlands Antilles. The majority of Dutch Antilleans spoke Papiamento, and both the Kingdom and the Federal Government used Dutch as the language for administration and legislation.[351]

348 Dijkhoff, M. (2004), p. 37.

349 Fleming-Rogers, A. (1990), p. 1.

350 Idem, p. 2.

351 Fleming gives this contradiction on pp. 141-143.

Focus on the language user in school

In education, the main user of the language is the pupil or student. Between 1954 and 2000, English was undoubtedly the *lingua franca* on both sides of the Island (Dutch and French). However, as noted, everyday English in St. Martin is not really Standard English but 'a Caribbean version of English'.[352] This was pointed out in a study by Linda Richardson[353] and clearly worded by Elshot[354] during our interview.

The students' knowledge of Caribbean English influenced their results at school. A study of the Ministry of Education on this particular issue recognized that 'students often enter the first grade with a limited vocabulary in English, which is attributed to the many Caribbean-English variants spoken at home. Their limited vocabulary has implications for their understanding of English in school.'[355]

When we take immigration into account, which since the 1970s has gained importance in the social and political discourse on the Island, we are led to the conclusion that for many students, both Standard English and Dutch are foreign languages. When we compare this linguistic fact with the data provided by our interviews and the literature, it appears that language policies between 1954 and 2000 did not pay enough attention to the direct language user at school. They were based rather on political than pragmatic motives.[356]

Language teaching

Apart from the political lack of decisiveness in choosing the language of instruction, there were also other gaps that were essentially related to language teaching and learning. For example, we repeatedly heard that the fact that students used both English and Dutch in education hindered them from achieving fluency in either language. Harrigan expressed the

352 Dijkhoff, M. (2004), p. 36.

353See Richardson, L. (1983). The sociolinguistic situation in St. Maarten, in *Studies in Caribbean Language: Papers from the Third Biennial Conference of the SCL, 1980.* St. Augustine: SCL, pp. 63-69.

354 Interview with Elshot.

355 Ministry of Education (2002). *Over taal gesproken. Schooltaalbeleid in het voorgezet onderwijs*. Pp. 12

356 Charles, H. (1995). *Report on a UNDP/UNESCO Mission to St. Maarten*, pp. 17-18.

same idea not only about St. Maarten, but also about Curaçao. 'They end up speaking bad English and so forth. The individual does not master either [language]. The approach needs to combine the necessary elements and competences so that the student can develop and adapt himself to the situation and his audience. As I can and do, I look at the audience and can comfortably switch to the kind of language that must be spoken, also between English and Dutch. The student should have the vocabulary and a certain affinity with the languages. The other thing I find difficult is that you may find yourself in a setting where you want to say something, but the word in the other language will not come to you. This can be frustrating. That will be a challenge and that is the biggest fear of the group that might want to go to Dutch-speaking schools. That they might need 15 minutes to read a page that will only take a few minutes for someone else.' Lourens[357] emphasized that this predicament was still in place at the turn of the millennium: 'We also say that we speak a lot of languages, but we never speak any language well'.

For Elshot, the reason why language teaching failed was not political, but educational. Students were never really taught to use the language fluently and with accuracy. 'Everything was *schriftelijk* [written]. We hardly had debates. Some of us can write perfect papers, but we were not taught to speak. Believe you me, we weren't trained structurally'. Furthermore, for Elshot the end of the colonial period did not change the situation in the field: 'Show me which school has a language lab? When I went to Maria Immaculata, they had a language lab and all students could use it for different languages. Have you ever seen a language lab at MPC [Milton Peter's College]?'

Snijders mentioned another educational variable why language learning was not as successful as it could have been: 'Most books were from Holland, transplanted here. All the texts and pictures were from and about Holland. And the teaching was in Dutch. So from the beginning in the First Grade, English was a subject, but the teaching was in Dutch. In the end, we had a rather good result in Dutch, but bad ones in their own language, whose negative consequences I can see now. Trying to adapt the material to the island called for a lot of extra work on the part of the teachers.'[358]

357 Interview with Lourens.

358 This theme will be dealt with when we look at the curriculum.

The European Dutch influence was not the only one. The Antillean federal system, centered around Curaçao as it was, did not help St. Maarten education. Larmonie compared St. Maarten and Curaçao students and concluded that 'it was clear that a St. Maarten 2nd grade class was better than their Curaçao counterparts precisely because in St. Maarten, they studied in English (mother tongue) and in Curaçao in Dutch (NT2)'.

Robertina reinforced this idea, saying that she 'became convinced in 1995 that Dutch was not the right choice. It was not a language that was reinforced: there were no newspapers, no TV, etc. It was a language spoken at school and in some well-educated families. Furthermore, Dutch was taught as if it was their mother tongue and English was taught as if it was a foreign language'. Furthermore, Standard 'English might not have been the same as St. Maarten English, but it should not have been taught as a foreign language. The English exams came from Curaçao, which is Papiamentu based, and were therefore far too easy for St. Maarten students. So besides the question which should be the language of instruction, they also needed to look how a language should be taught: as a first language, a second language or a foreign language. In the 1980s, nobody was talking about that, except in the MAC school's elementary educational program, where they had decided to use English'.

For Buncamper, some of the gaps that existed in education before the 1980s had to do with the fact that the majority of the Sisters were not from the Island, not even from the region. Their lifestyle meant that they belonged to a different class within society. Furthermore, most Dutch teachers, who came to teach on St. Maarten, did not integrate in the local community, sometimes because they returned to the Netherlands before they could really find their niche on the Island. This situation entailed that 'they were transferring knowledge. They could not look into the minds of the local persons. They could not say this is what local persons are going to need at the end of the 20th Century and at the beginning of the 21st Century. They could never say that because that is what they knew. I think that it would be unfair to judge them, because they did not know.' Nonetheless, at another level, Buncamper still finds that 'if you had to look back now, I would say Yes, because they should have done it. They should have had that knowledge. If they didn't do it, it is dependent on a number of factors. That's the bottom line.'

From our interviews, some conclusions are self-evident.

The Netherlands, as a country, did not influence St. Maarten's education directly. The Dutch Sisters and teachers did. The fact that some teachers went to pursue their teacher education in the Netherlands also played an indirect role.

Curaçao, the seat of the Dutch Antillean federal government, exerted both a structural and practical influence on St. Maarten's education: firstly, because the inspectorate was federal; secondly, because textbooks used in Curaçao were also used in St. Maarten; thirdly, because some of the teachers did their secondary and/or teacher education in Curaçao.

Some of the teachers were born and/or educated in Aruba or Curaçao, which also influenced their linguistic background (whether their first language was St. Maarten English or Papiamento, and whether they had been seriously acquainted with Dutch).

The language privileged in school was reflected in the configuration of the teaching staff. Dutch teachers came mostly from the Netherlands or Suriname, and English teachers came from other Caribbean islands.

Relation to identity: 'mother tongue' in St. Maarten

The multi-dimensional nature of the territory of St. Maarten, its inhabitants and others, who claim the Island as a part of their self-definition (e.g. the St. Maarten diaspora), also manifested itself in the discourse about the language of instruction. Up until the 1970s, the main poles of discussion were between English or Dutch instruction. From the 1970s onwards, the presence of a large number of foreigners and 'new' St. Maarteners, who had been born and raised on the Island, broadened the debate.

On the one hand, the defenders of St. Maarten English pleaded for more visibility of the local version of English in education. For Haddock, it would be very unwise to speak of Standard and St. Maarten English in either-or terms. 'St. Maarten is a small island. Stick with your Standard English and you can move around the world. In your conversations, you can use your St. Maarten English.' Elshot did not see why the local variation of English should not be given some degree of visibility in the curriculum; for her, both 'Englishes' can exist side-by-side. According to her, 'you have to show people more sides of the coin. It is good. That is our native language in SXM. You have to know where you come from and where you

are going to. I don't feel that we should crush that movement. We should encourage it to grow.'

On the other hand, others pose the more radical question whether it is still accurate to speak of *one* mother tongue in the context of pupils and students. Robertina thinks, for instance, that the language situation has changed noticeably; 'English is no longer the language of all students. We should switch to Spanish or Creole, probably.'

Vision for the future

Looking back, we might feel inclined to say that language has been a cause of much debate among educators. Our interviews have shown that there were clear advocates of English and of Dutch, respectively.

The pro-English position was represented by Lourens, originally from another English-speaking island. She recognized that many parents have always opted for Dutch out of pragmatic considerations, but she played down the significance of the parents' argument. 'Many persons from the different islands want their children to learn Dutch, because they think that it is a way to advance socially, but they can't help them with it. Not realizing that in Europe, people who have Dutch as their first language still want to learn English. Even in Amsterdam people speak English, but people don't understand this until their child gets stuck in the Third or Fourth Grade here. At St. Maarten Academy, they study in English and the children can think in English; they can express themselves. But the children in Dutch schools can't, no matter how hard they try.'

The pro-Dutch stance was voiced, for instance, by Voges, who justified his option saying: 'Administration is in Dutch, education in The Netherlands is cheaper than in USA and "because I have a Dutch passport" (say the new, naturalized Caribbean Dutch citizens).' Without knowing what Voges would say during our interview, Lourens questioned the argument for Dutch-medium education in Catholic schools. She wondered whether their pro-Dutch policy was a reaction to the fact that 'outsiders coming in —like Haitians, those from Santo Domingo, the Indians and the Chinese—, for whatever reason, choose for Dutch-speaking schools. The St. Maarteners, however, are English-speaking at home and will more easily choose for schools with English as the language of instruction. In the future, you could have that people with Indian, Chinese and Anglophone Caribbean backgrounds will have

better access to posts in government where Dutch is used than the St. Maarten population will have. So I wonder whether that is the fear that Mr. Voges is endorsing with Dutch still being a language of instruction on St. Maarten. Is it only the need to have your children continue their education in the Netherlands, or is it to secure jobs for a segment of the population as civil servants, because they know Dutch?'[359]

Fleming indicated in her study that even though some people in the Ministry of Education think that by making English the universal language of instruction in St. Maarten, the students' school results would be better, this idea has never been backed by the majority of parents, teachers, principals or school board members. A lot of people were and are still not convinced that changing the language of instruction alone would have that big an impact on the academic achievement of the students. Although the majority of the teachers speak English, they are not qualified to teach in English. Moreover, the public and private schools do not have the same level of support from the Island Government in this matter.[360]

Elshot also challenged current critical standpoints and asked to not reduce the whole matter of school results to the language of instruction. According to her, 'the policy makers don't do enough research into why they are going to discontinue a system. Why discontinue a system that works? If you have 23 children and, let's say, 5 of them made it to HAVO, 15 made it to MAVO, and 3 made it to LTS, then, you have a perfect percentage that you'd like to build on. It is a myth that Dutch cannot be taught to children that speak another language at home. It is not based on research. They cannot prove that the main factor of failure in SXM is language. When you can have a significant amount of Haitian and Dominican children succeeding, then, language is not the main factor. We should be the language Mecca of the Caribbean. People envy us. When I go to conferences, I can understand French, Spanish, English and Dutch and, in addition to that, Papiamento. We have such a good thing going that we should cash in on that. We should increase the children's exposure to languages, not diminish it. The children themselves want to communicate with each other in their different languages. They want to greet the Jamaican

359 Interview with Lourens.

360 Interview with Fleming.

boy in English and chat with the Dominican girl in Spanish. What is wrong with teaching us French? We can use it when we go to the French side. We have a unique opportunity here.'[361]

Between the above positions, there has also been a middle stance, which was defended, for instance, by Mr. Harrigan. He pleaded for a compromise on the issue of the language of instruction in St. Maarten. He would like to see both languages being used, albeit in unequal degrees. 'I personally think that it should be English with a strong composition of Dutch. I don't think that Dutch should be eliminated at all. Our ties with the Dutch tradition (the Kingdom, the government), a lot of our official documents are still in the Dutch language. I think that if you want to really have that needed power, it would be beneficial to first master the English language and Dutch at a level where you can also actually bargain with it. I am not sure whether we have come to that stage yet of accepting that that is possible. Unlike the rest of the Caribbean, we seem to be struggling with what our language of instruction should be and whether we should be bi-lingual or multi-lingual or plurilingual as is mentioned as well. Most of the rest of the Caribbean and even the USA would wish that they would have the opportunities that we do in the Netherlands Antilles to be able to communicate in more than one language. But I think that it is something that we should not forget. We should try and capitalize on it, use it to our advantage. I see that St. Maarten can almost become a sort of, I don't want to use the word "trading post", but more of a center in the Caribbean for language development, where people can come and actually learn how we are able to instruct students to the extent that they are able to survive or manage in more than one language. But I think that it calls for some refinement of what we are able to do at the moment.'[362]

However, given the considerable influx of immigrants since the beginning of the 1970s, this resulted in having other first languages next to St. Maarten English. The question is now whether schools should embrace multilingual education. This comes at a time when the importance of multilingual education is being corroborated by studies conducted in the business world. 'English is used in written and oral communication as well as for internal

361 Interview with Elshot.

362 Interview with Harrigan.

and external contacts. Spanish is used in oral communication with colleagues and clients. The use of Dutch is highly limited to certain areas such as oral contacts with clients and the reading of instructions in Dutch. English, Spanish and Dutch are furthermore important languages for general information and telephone conversations. For internet, e-mail, meetings, scientific knowledge and business correspondence, knowledge of English is eminent and for information in reports Dutch is still important next to English. The general trend is that the role of English and Spanish as a language of communication is growing in all Antillean communities.'[363]

Of all our interviewees, Elshot was not only completely critical about the past, but also showed a keen interest in the future. She was adamantly against monolingual education, saying: 'To streamline and say we are going to use English as the language of instruction, to me, is wrong. The parents should be given choice.' A similar idea was put forward by Connor: 'If Chinese and Indian children can survive and do quite well here (and we don't speak their language), then, so can our children. For parents who can afford it, we have schools that do that, like the CIA. Parents who can afford it can offer it to their children. The government should make sure that the model is affordable to all children, regardless their social group.' In her opinion 'people are making it difficult. We have a unique setting in education that has the right ingredients for success. The groups that are failing are of a lesser intelligence and must probably be guided in a different way. That '*traject*' is what we need. Instead of giving them too many cognitive things, they should be given what they need. If you narrow all to English, later on, SXM will suffer. We are a touristic island. We should open it all up so that children can learn more languages.'[364]

There is a need to open up the debate beyond 'post-colonial traumas about the past' or nationalistic agendas. There is a real danger that, as Elshot indicated, 'they are narrowing down this language issue too much. The Dominican and Haitian children speak Patois or Spanish at home and English or Dutch at school. I have seen the old version of the Ruby La Vega. We were forced into a situation where some of our teachers were from the English-speaking Caribbean and others from Suriname (a former Dutch colony). So we developed

363 Dijkhoff, M. (2004), p. 34.

364 Interview with Elshot and Connor.

two streams: one English and another Dutch. If you had been trained in the English system, you were the teacher designated to give the primary subjects in English. However, every day, there would be a switching between the languages. The Dutch-speaking teachers taught Dutch to the children in the English stream and vice-versa. Their level would be a bit *lager* in Dutch, but definitely the Dutch stream was geared towards placement for the MPC and the English was geared for the entrance exam at the Academy. Wherever they came, their (second) language was better than the average.'[365]

One of the variables that is often forgotten is that the students hardly ever came across situations where they were required to use either *formal* English or *correct* Dutch. It was not only a question of Dutch being absent from the lived experience; the entire formal and academic dimension of social life, in which many would have failed because of language deficiency, was partially or completely absent. St. Maarten constituted no exception. What observers have witnessed elsewhere in the world also happened in St. Maarten: children from families with better educational backgrounds (be it in English or Dutch or both) were at an advantage in relation to the rest. This observation was confirmed during our formal interviews and informal conversations. This would somewhat change with the arrival of cable and satellite TV. The waves of American and Canadian tourists would also bring St. Maarteners face-to-face with other non-Caribbean Englishes, not only different, but also more formal in their vocabulary and syntax.

Furthermore (and oddly enough), when Haddock compared the MacKay initiative and the current changes in favor of Foundation-Based Education (FBE), he suggested that the educational system in St. Maarten changed precisely because people are following the Netherlands now. The current link with the Netherlands (even though the sense of 'the Kingdom' is no longer present) has become an innovative force. This may show that, as in regard to the relationship between the Netherlands Antilles and the Kingdom, the Netherlands cannot be blamed for having been too involved in the life of the Islands, but, on the contrary, for not having been involved enough.

At the level of post-colonial critique, we have observed that St. Maarten children were not taught to speak Dutch as well as their Surinamese peers, nor were they taught

365 Interview with Elshot.

Standard English as well as their other English-speaking Caribbean counterparts. This would seem to reinforce the hypothesis that the Netherlands did not enforce a clear colonial, cultural policy in the Dutch Antilles. Furthermore, it is not clear whether the Kingdom even had such a policy. On the other hand, our observation may also show that there has never been a consensus among St. Maarten politicians, educators and people at large as to what language should have been used in schools.

When non-Catholic schools were founded, they opted for English as the language of instruction. A first look may suggest that this indicated a clear turn towards English and away from Dutch. However, this may have been due more to chance than to vision. Unlike Surinamese non-Catholic Christians, Protestant and Evangelical St. Maarteners did not have strong links with their European Dutch co-religionists, which would have reinforced Dutch as the language. Instead, they had connections with other English-speaking Caribbean and, especially, American congregations. In a similar way that (mostly) Catholic schools wanted to prepare their students to go on for further studies in the Netherlands, which required Dutch as the language of instruction, Protestant and Evangelical schools functioned as bridges to an education in the USA, which required English.

Partial concluding remarks

Our presentation of the legal and linguistic complexities of St. Maarten indicate that the issue of the language instruction in St. Maarten could be seen as a hub on which different elements converge: policy, vision of education, teaching practice, identity and the questions raised by the future.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands could be described as negligent in relation to the Dutch Antilles and, especially, with respect to the three 'English-speaking' islands (Saba, St. Maarten and Statia). Furthermore, the federal Dutch Antillean government did not seem to be more interested in St. Maarten's identity and culture than their European Dutch partners.

Educators were not on the same line as to what should happen in relation to the language of instruction. In fact, they still disagree on this point. It is interesting to see that some of our interviewees are starting to envisage the issue no longer in light of the past, but of the future. To reduce the question to either English or to Dutch would not respond

sufficiently to the present needs of St. Maarten or to its current demographic and linguistic configuration.

CURRICULUM AND TEACHING MATERIALS

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I shall concentrate on the issue of the curriculum in St. Maarten, often translated in terms of the materials used to deliver said curriculum. The first thing that will be introduced in this section is a working definition of the word 'curriculum'. Thereafter, I shall briefly sketch the framework within which the curriculum in St. Maarten was delineated between 1954 and 2000. The next topics which I shall present are the findings which emerged from my interviews and questionnaires. Subsequently, I shall mention three factors, which have shaped the further development of education in St. Maarten: the influence of Curaçao, the arrival of cable TV, and the country's [the Dutch Antilles] Antilleanization policies. Finally, I shall conclude by summarizing the main thrust of this chapter.

THE CURRICULUM: A WORKING DEFINITION

Etymologically speaking, the term 'curriculum' comes from the Latin word '*currere*,' which means 'to run'.[368] We can picture it as the tracks which would set or fix the runners' course in ancient Greece, but also in modern times. Curriculum was 'a course'. In education, curriculum is the route designed to foster learning at a given stage, 'all the learning which is planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried on in groups or individually, inside or outside the school'.369 Curricula differ from syllabi, which are more detailed lists of the contents of programs, and may, consequently, entail several syllabi.

368 Cfr. Goodson, I. & Ball, S. (eds.) (2011). *Defining The Curriculum, Histories and Ethnographies.* Routledge Library Editions: Education.

369 Cfr. Jackson, P. (1992). *Handbook of Research on Curriculum*. New York: Macmillan.

IMPORTANCE OF THE CURRICULUM

A good and functional curriculum constitutes an essential part of an educational system. Countries may opt for one national curriculum or several, depending on school types (e.g. public vs. private), the language of instruction (e.g. the Flemish vs. the Walloon curriculum in Belgium), or other factors. Furthermore, the mandatory character of a given curriculum often depends on the existence of centralized testing or lack thereof (e.g. on the national or provincial level).

Most —if not all— curricula are designed to prepare students to function within a given society and, more specifically, to position themselves in the labor market. This explains why curricula around the world are both similar and dissimilar. They all seek to teach the basics of language, math, science, social studies, physical education and, oftentimes, the arts370. Buncamper referred to this during our interview by saying that the curriculum process should, at least in part, aim at 'the socialization of people'. In other words, 'educators must teach young people the social skills they need to fit into the existing society: the humanization of people (the development in our youth of a sense of self-respect, self-esteem and inner peace) and the utilitarian function (produce persons capable of obtaining and holding a job).' In short, the curriculum should enhance the likelihood that students will be capable of earning their livelihood after school, so that they do not become a burden on society.[371]

The curriculum is more than merely a list of subjects (the learning content) to be dealt with the schooling process. It also refers to the whole learning experience which pupils undergo, with the help of teachers and schools. Moreover, as Buncamper mentioned during our interview, there is a necessary link between the curriculum, the society and the job markets. Together, they constitute a network of local and global forces interlocked in a game which involves both interaction and competition.

Ideally speaking, curricula both domesticate and emancipate children and youngsters; they should help them to become both team players and non-conformists

370 Chalker, D. & Haynes, R. (1994). *World class schools: New standards for education.* Lancaster: Technomic Pub. Co., p. 139.

371 Interview with Buncamper.

capable of changing the status quo by creative and innovative means. If and when education planners and systems become oblivious of these mechanisms, they betray the very societies as well as the students that they are meant to safeguard and develop. In the Caribbean, ever since its colonization by the European powers, the local and global benefits of education have not always gone hand in hand.[372] Moreover maybe it has not really advanced either of them.

Furthermore, school systems do not only bear responsibilities vis-à-vis the present, but also —and above all— vis-à-vis the future. They must ensure that the future needs of society will be met. The goal of education, seen as a process lasting many years, is to equip children and youngsters to live in a world, which does not yet completely exist. In this sense, the school curricula resemble roadmaps with some preliminary, basic stops along the way towards plausible futures. Hence, when a clear mismatch between what students were taught and the social reality they encounter upon leaving the school banks becomes manifest, curricular reform becomes an urgent necessity.[373]

C**URRICULUM PRACTICE**

As indicated above, there is more to curricula than learning items and activities to be implemented in school settings. They are usually issued by ministries of education or other instances, depending on the nation-state's laws. They are not neutral, value-free social realities. Behind every curriculum, there are value judgments. Curricula do not exist in a vacuum: they are social realities and the result of political relationships and choices. They represent the perspectives of people and their history.[374]

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372 George, M. and Van Enckevort, M. (2011). "Identifying education in a global world: Education on St. Maarten, a Caribbean search for belonging", in George, M. (ed.) (2011). International Explorations In Education: Belgium, India, St. Maarten (The Netherlands Antilles), Suriname and Vietnam. Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing. Pp. 59-65, 62.

373 Graham, D. and Tytler, D. (1993). *A lesson for us al.* London and New York: Routledge, pp. 4-5; McLean, M. (1990). *Britain and a single market Europe. Prospects for a common school curriculum.* London: Kogan, pg. 1. See also Chalker, D. and Haynes, R. (1994), p. 119.

374 Country Report, Netherlands Antilles (2009), pp. 27-28

Curricula are also not only issued, they are also received. The action of curriculum designers is met with reactions in the field, and the classroom is usually the space where all this takes on concrete shape. In this chapter, I shall study both the design of and the response to the general curriculum in St. Maarten.

FRAMEWORK OF THE CURRICULUM IN ST. MAARTEN

Education, as we mentioned earlier, is part of the internal affairs of the Kingdom constituent countries and is, therefore, not regulated by the Statute. In the case of the (then) Netherlands Antilles, the country set the educational course, while the Island Territories financed the educational activities.[376] Stevens described this relationship as follows: 'We depended a lot on Curaçao. When they saw that we were doing well, we started working together. We started to work with them and see how their *leerplan* [curriculum, syllabus] was put together. So we copied a lot when necessary. We also worked with other schools.'

Furthermore, Hodge told me that 'the curriculum was prepared by the Principal and the School Board. There was also a copy of the curriculum for teachers to consult. In fact, at the beginning of each year, each teacher got a copy of the timetable and the curriculum.' Unfortunately, Hodge no longer had a copy of the curriculum, because 'with the 1995 hurricane, most things were lost. Most material regarding your period, 1945-2000, has been blown away then.' He added that 'in the old days (prior to 1965-1970), the curriculum was lesson-centered, but in my days as principal, a child-centered approach was promoted.'

In 1953, all public schools were handed over to the Island Territory.[377] The island territories would from that point onwards have different institutions in charge of managing schools. Thus, it was stipulated: '(1) the island territories are independent with respect to the care of their own affairs' and (2) 'All subjects not referred to in Article 2a belong to the responsibility of an Island Territory'.[378] As for St. Maarten, the education umbrella

376 ERNA art. 2, Constitution art. 140

377 P.B. 1954, NO. 34; see also, *The Education Summit*, (2004), p. 10.

378 The island regulation of the Netherlands Antilles. Publication Sheet 1959 No. 39, First Title, General Provisions, Article 1.

organizations would be: the Executive Council of the Island territory of the Windward Islands, the Methodist Agogic Centre (MAC), the Protestant-Christian Education Windward Islands, the Foundation for Catholic Education and the Anglican Church school board.[381] These were not only administrative bodies, but also powerful decision-makers, e.g. to appoint staff members. The rules were set out in the documents: 'The responsibilities of the board, the so-called school board, are: the admittance and removal of students; nomination and dismissal of personal; finance administration of the school; determination of the time table, lesson plans, curriculum and the choices of school materials.'[382]

Stevens hinted at the power held by the boards during our interview: 'When it comes down to the salary system and all those things, for instance, the *benoemingsvoorwaarden* [appointing conditions], how to go about it when you appoint people, the interviews, the *gedragsregels voor het bestuur* [code of conduct of the board] — things you usually don't think about, for instance, the *directiestatuut* [Statute of the board], we had a *statuut* [Statute] but no *directiestatuut* [Statute of the board]. … We have a foundation. We have the Board, which is like untouchable'.[383]

As a result of the mentioned structural changes within the Netherlands Antilles, the Island Government was granted a double function in education: being the ultimate coordinating authority[384] and also the financier (including the subsidized non-governmental or private schools).[385]

381 Departement van Onderwijs (1982)., Beknopte achtergrondinformatie van Land en onderwijssysteem. Nederlandse Antillen.

382 Idem, p. 40

383 Intrview with Asha Stevens.

384 Van Harte, M. *Notitie voor de Minister van Onderwijs de heer J.P. Veeris. Onderwerp: Verdeling van bevoegdheden tussen "Land" en "Eiland" met betrekking tot het Antilliaans Onderwijs*. Departement van Onderwijs, 1980.

385 Fleming Rogers, A. (1990), p. 16.

The Island Territory of St. Maarten, in compliance with the law, set up its own insular *executive* 'Department of Education'.[386] The rules and regulations, however, continue to come down from the Federal Government, as Asha Stevens told me.

THE CURRICULUM IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

A report from the educational department for the Dutch Antilles concerning the curriculum, the timetable, the list of absentees and the students' marks shows that[387] the implementation and structure of the educational policies in the Netherlands Antilles did not differ considerably from the curriculum followed in the Netherlands.[388] Nonetheless, my interviews indicated that when teachers tried not to follow The Netherlands, they often used materials from Curaçao (which were more Caribbean, but not always applicable to St. Maartens' reality, especially in matters of geography and biology).

Stevens told me that the curriculum at the Christian Hillside School comprised eight domains: English, Dutch, the three Rs (reading, writing and arithmetic), Social Studies and, in the higher classes: biology, geography, history and traffic.[389] She also told us that she developed some local materials to be used in her school, but did not have them anymore because 'although we had some storerooms, in the 1995 hurricane, most of our classrooms and storage areas were destroyed.'

In other sources,[390] I found that the study areas received an array of names, sometimes depending on the grade in which they were taught: Language (Dutch and English) and Communication, Mathematics, Social Studies, Integrated Science and Technology, Philosophy of Life, Social and Emotional Development, Health and Physical

386 Country Report, Netherlands Antilles (2009), p. 48.

387 It has to be noted that most of the materials came from the documentation center of the MAC. (see appendix)

388 De Kwaasteniet, M. (1990). Denominational education and contemporary education policy in the Netherlands. In *European Journal of Education* (20: 4), pp. 371-383.

389 Interview with Asha Stevens.

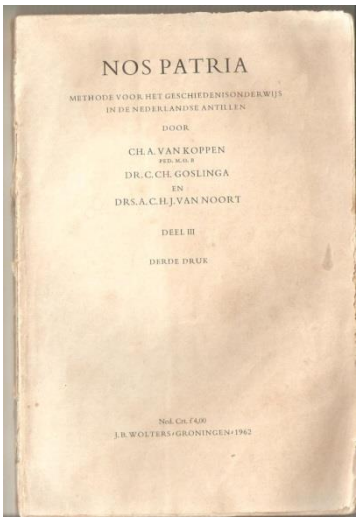
390 For some subjects we were able to take a copy of the books (see appendix).

Education, Culture and Artistic Development, History, Geography, Religious Education, Art, Handwriting, Handicraft and Music.[391]

The educational landscape was radically reformed when FBE was adopted and learning centers were incorporated into the classroom.

MOST USED PRINTED TEACHING MATERIALS

My interviewees practically unanimously referred to the following sources produced in Curaçao as being the main inspiration *in Dutch*:


NOS PATRIA

METHODE VOOR HET GESCHIEDENISONDERWIJS IN DE NEDERLANDSE ANTILLEN

DOOR

CH. A. VAN KOPPEN

DR. C. CH. GOSLINGA

EN

DRS. A. C. H. J. VAN NOORT

DEEL III

DERDE DRUK

Dutch as foreign language: Fr. Anton Mej, *Zonnig Nederlands. Methode voor de Nederlandse taal voor het R.K. lager onderwijs in de Nederlandse Antillen.*

History: *Nos Patria.*[392]

Geography: Fr. M. Walterus en Drs. H. J. Jansen, *Nos Tera. Methode voor het aardrijkskunde-onderwijs.*

Copies of these books are found in the Archive of the Fraters van Tilburg.[393]

Dutch as foreign language

In the 1960s, teachers used *Zonnig Nederlands* as Shaminee, Buncamper and Streefkerk indicated.

391 Handbook Oranje School's Parent Handbook, M. Genevieve De Weever Primary school, Leonard Connor School, MAC.

392 Departement van Onderwijs, p. 83.

393 According to the Frater Jan Heerkens (see letter in appendix 6), the method "Zonnig Nederlands" exists of 16 parts for the students, with separate books for the teachers. Besides the 1st and 2nd print for the Catholic schools, a side issue came for the Non-Catholic schools. The method "Nos Tera" exits in the form of a precursor and 4 parts, with a total of more or less 500 pages (see appendix 8).

In 1977, Larmonie was contacted by the Federal Department of Education to come to St. Maarten for one year to develop the curriculum for Dutch as subject for the Windward Islands. He took MacKay's method into account and developed the following structure:

1st-2nd Grades: English as mother tongue

3rd Grade: Dutch (with a smooth transition)

4th Grade: Dutch (as language of instruction)

As a result of this restructuring, a reading program and a book for reading: *De 7 mijlslaarzen*, (7 steps: read English → Dutch) was developed. The approach used in this method was as follows:

It departed from the same sounds e.g. *De Kip is in het hok*

It went on to sounds that are almost the same (*ram, raam*)

And it finally tackled differences: English: pool (pu:l) vs. Dutch: *poel* (poul)

I must add here that Larmonie was the only person to mention this method.

After 2000, teachers continued to use the school books from The Netherlands, such as *Taalkabaal* and *Allemaal taal.*[394] This is understandable since St. Maarten could not design its own Dutch courses for such a few Dutch-medium schools.

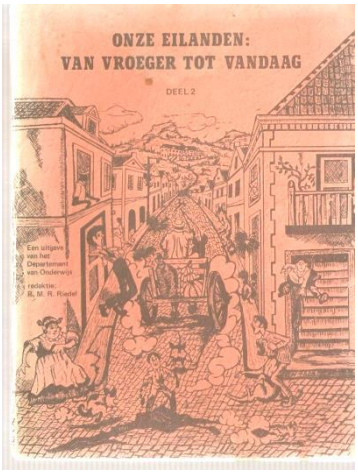
History

It was not until the sixties — after the Kingdom Charter (1954) — that history books were made for the Netherlands Antilles. However, they were printed and, in most cases, also written by Dutch authors. The Sisters had already encountered this problem: 'For history we had the Dutch books about the history of the mother country, history about the Netherlands. For the local history, we just tried something, since we did not know the history also'.[395]

394 Cf. OC en W v(1996). De Antilliaanse krachtproef, in *Uitleg (*17), p. 11.

395 Milton: en voor de vakken geschiedenis, aardrijkskunde? Zr. Marie Laurence: daar had je weer de Nederlandse boeken voor, vaderlandse geschiedenis, de lokale geschiedenis dat probeerde je zo een beetje later is het gegroeid, dan ga je beseffen, je had natuurlijk niets anders, dus ging je toch maar iets doen, er is veel verbeterd in het onderwijs.

From the 60s onwards, *Nos Patria* became the main source of inspiration. It was written for history education in the Netherlands Antilles and published in the 1960's by J.B. Wolters in Groningen. Its drawback was that it was aimed at the history of Curaçao, complemented with some elements of the history of the Netherlands.[396] Saba, St. Eustatius and St. Maarten, the three predominantly English-speaking islands, were not the main focus.



Between1978–1982, the department of Education published other book especially made for the Netherlands Antilles entitled: *Onze Eilanden: van vroeger tot vandaag.* However, once again, these books zoomed in on the history of Curaçao.[397]

Towards the 90s, one of our interviewees 'made two textbooks for Caribbean history'.[398] In her case, she felt that the SXM Academy was exerting a positive influence on the Island's education, since they followed the curriculum and textbook materials for the CXC from the Caribbean Examination Council.[399]

Geography

In order to put their teaching into context, the Sisters would use the map of the Island and point out certain places on it. Thereafter, the pupils had to explain what activities took place there and what most people did in terms of employment.[400]

Later on, *Nos Terra* was undoubtedly the most used textbook for geography. Beside this text, Streefkerk also mentioned *Waarom daar?* and *Natuur Antillen*, both in Dutch.

396 See appendix 4for an typical examples.

397 See appendix 5 for an examples.

398 History books

399 A book that was used as source was: *Door de tijden heen*.

400 En wij hadden later ook een plattegrond van het eiland, dan leerden wij zij op te letten zoals, wat gebeurt er op die plek, waar leven de mensen van, aardrijkskunde was ook zo.

However, here too, the main objections from teachers and students were that they had been designed from the perspective of Curaçao.[401]

LOCAL PRODUCTION OF TEACHING MATERIALS

Since education started to become increasingly focused on the local reality and to orbit toward English in the last decades, the next question was whether and to what extent local curricular materials were produced on St. Maarten. The findings of my interviews and questionnaire in this respect are as follows.

According to the interviews

The Sisters of Voorschoten told me during one of the interviews that they had occasionally developed their own materials. Harry Schaminee,[402] a Dutch educator, did not agree. 'No, I do not have the feeling that the Sisters really developed any material. They used the material coming from Curaçao, which was developed by the religious Brothers of Tilburg.' In fact, he could not remember any local books at all.[403]

However, the Sisters did make an effort to at least try to contextualize some of the school books.[404] It is clear from most sources that most school books around the 60s were Dutch books from the Netherlands. When this was not the case, the books were developed by the Fraters of Tilburg in Curaçao (mentioned in the previous section). The Sisters recalled using these books in their schools in St. Maarten, especially *Zonnig Nederland* and *de Knoek*,

401 See appendix 8 for examples.

402 Interview with Schaminee in 2005.

403 Schaminee mentioned that it was already special to have a book like *Mijn zuster de negerin* from Nicholaas (Cola) Debroit, on the list of required reading, even though this book came from Curaçao.

404 Milton: en alle boeken kwamen uit Nederland? Zr. Constance: ja ja, in principe, alles was Nederlands, ik heb aardrijkskunde gegeven, ik maakte er veel boeken zelf. Een andere leraar maakte ze ook zelfs en kwam met gestencilde boeken. Milton: is zulk materiaal nog ergens te vinden? Zr. Marie Laurence: Ik denk dat je daarvoor op St. Maarten moet zijn, op school in het archief of zo. Wij hebben niets.

despite the fact that they dealt with things such as cactus trees, which are found in the Leeward Islands, but not in St. Maarten.[405]

Sr. Constance mentioned that she had developed some materials:[406] 'I remember I made plasticized cards, which were new. You wanted to get away from the history books, so we started typing and making stencils. I know that some teachers still used Dutch things in Grade 6. But right now, a lot of emphasis is being put on the Caribbean. Things have changed a lot. At a given moment, you started looking for books about the Caribbean and illustrations. Though for exam candidates in grammar, we all had basically the same on the Island. In general, though, we started looking for things about the Island. I don't think that children know much about Holland, as Dutch children don't know much about the Caribbean. You talk about Haiti and the Haitian revolution, for instance, and you try and have black history month, etc.' Voges, from the Catholic Board, indicated that the Catholic school could 'adapt the government's curriculum to its needs'.

When I spoke to a Dutch educator, who had been involved in St. Maarten's education for almost 30 years at all levels, and who completely identified herself as a St. Maartener by choice, she described a similar situation. She mentioned that Rhoda Arrindell, a previous Minister of Education[407] and one of her students, once said 'that I was one of the first teachers that acknowledged that the Dutch curriculum did not make any sense anymore.' One of the biggest obstacles was that the Dutch language, which was the language of instruction at the Milton Peters' College, made it difficult to find (Dutch) teaching materials about the Caribbean. Hence, teachers had to translate most of the texts from English. In 1984 or 1985, while our interviewee was teaching simultaneously at Milton

405 Sr. Marie Laurence "Ze hadden al schoolboeken, of ze stelden in Nederland boeken op of zoiets, er kwamen veel boeken uit Nederland, maar ik weet dat methode van Nederlands die kwam van Curaçao, van de Fraters, maar dan had je het probleem, die waren gemaakt voor de Nederlandse [benedenwinden] eilanden, en dan kwamen er dingen bij die niet pasten op St. Maarten, je had de *knoek* en zo, die waren niet op St. Maarten, en zoveel cactussen die ze daar hebben op die eilanden, die vindt je niet op St. Maarten, dus er was toch tekeningen die niet direct voor St. Maarten geschikt was".

406 Interview with Franky Haddock.

407 Rhoda Arrindell was a student of Maria Van Enckevort. Rhoda was the Minister of Education on St. Maarten from October 2010 until June 2012.

Peter's and SXM Academy and had, by that time, translated most of the book, she realized that on a test one could find a couple of paragraphs by students at the Academy, while students at the Milton Peters College only wrote a couple of lines. She concluded that 'students were forced to learn in a language that was not reinforced in their daily lives.'

Among the sources for teaching history were the books written by Dr. Hartog and Will Johnson. Harrigan also told me that students were occasionally taken on excursions,[408] for example, to Fort Willem for history and to Cupacoy for geography. One must bear in mind, however, that at that moment the infrastructure on the Island was different. In those days —Harrigan added— the road behind Cake House going to Court Road had not yet been built, which meant that pupils could not be taken to see how land was cut away, revealing volcanic layers.

Teachers were ultimately those implementing the changes, but when they were less versed in their subject or newcomers to the Island, they naturally kept to their textbooks, which, as said, did not always match St. Maarten's reality.

When I told one of my interviewees that some thought that nothing concerning the Caribbean directly had been produced or dealt with in the 70s and 80s, she disagreed: 'I don't think that it is completely true. You had Antillean history books, like *Nos Patria*, which was an Antillean book. I also collected some material that teachers had put together, especially in the 6th Form of primary education. Matthias Voges had made a geography book at the beginning of the 80s on SXM and Antillean history for MAVO.' She concluded that 'it depended a lot on the teacher'. Officially, there was not much or even nothing particularly local in the curriculum, but in the everyday life of the classroom, the teachers had the last word. 'There were teachers that put their own [SXM-oriented] material together on their own time and according to their own information and used stencils.'

Connor confirmed that also books from the British islands were used in St. Maarten's primary schools. Lourens,[409] too, revealed that teachers generally combined American and Caribbean (from the English-speaking Caribbean) sources 'because we live in the Caribbean and that has always been promoted.' Those sources were complemented with resources

408 Jane Buncamper and the sisters already made mention of this methodology.

409 Interview with Patricia Lourens.

from the Association for Curriculum and Supervision, since 'most of the teachers were members of ASCD International'.[410]

The ASCD[411] started in the United States and organized yearly international meetings in the USA to discuss new ideas in education, curriculum, supervision, testing, assessment, and so on. Some of the people belonging to the international circuit of the ASCD were also markers for the (Caribbean) CXC exam and had insights and materials to share. In short, although educators who could speak Dutch had initially tended to rely on the Netherlands and Curaçao, some years later the influence of the USA and the English-speaking West Indies grew. It is worth mentioning that even though there have always been educators in St. Maarten, who could speak Spanish and French, the Spanish and French-speaking Caribbean (not even French Saint Martin) were never mentioned during my interviews as sources of curricular inspiration, not even when one considers that Puerto Rico is bilingual (Spanish and English) and closer to St. Maarten than Curaçao, the mainland USA and the Netherlands.

As suggested, there was also a gap between the Federal and Island levels. This mismatch between levels allowed for experimentation in the classroom, with both its positive and negative sides. The report[412] mentioned earlier underlined that innovations often were ad hoc, since they lacked a planned and coordinated vision. 'People often start with a certain innovation project and only when it reached an advance stage or if it seems to go wrong, will assistance be requested. This process is surely because there is no law on the Netherlands Antilles that prohibits to experiment.'

Boirard found that when she was a pupil 'the curriculum was not in tune with the local reality". But as a teacher, she focused more on St. Maarten in the class. From my conversation that transpired with Connor, the absence of records of the local teaching materials may hide a more complex truth. Connor told me that in her teaching (mostly in the 2nd and 3rd Grades) she had always made 'the pupils learn all the names of the beaches, hills, bays and villages, especially during geography classes (Frontstreet and the stegen…).'

410 For a description of their activity, see : www.ascd.org.

411 During our field research we also developed some workshop on how to implement social studies.

412 Nederlandse Antillen (1982), p 74.

This passing remark may explain why my interviewees often said that they had contextualized their teaching, while, in fact, little record of that is extant. Much of the local 'production' must have been done during the oral delivery of the curriculum, but there is no way to confirm this.

The classroom dimension of innovation was also underlined by Harrigan, who did not only regret that there were not enough written materials during his time as a teacher, but also that 'there was too much of a dependence on the *methoden* [methods]'. Curriculum should be seen as a process within which teachers and pupils are the main protagonists, and not the textbooks. Therefore, in his own teaching experience, he would spend time before the math lessons 'getting the stuff ready (cutting shapes and forms, like circles and rectangles etc., getting bottle stoppers). (…) I would elicit the technical answers from them, asking them to suggest possibilities and then to try them out. I used to walk them through the steps.' His proactive approach to the curriculum also had a community-building aspect, since 'as a classroom teacher I feel that I can contribute to reducing the violence on the Island by making the lessons more interesting. When the students feel that they can find the answers by themselves, then, that is good for their all-round self-esteem'.

As for contextualizing education, Artsen was of the opinion that the MAC was ahead of the times in this respect. From the start, they developed their own curriculum based on a holistic and eclectic approach.[413] It advanced in a spiral, integrated and interdisciplinary movement around themes. The MAC became the school of foreigners, the 'Caribbean' school. The work of the MAC was supported by the expertise of a curriculum specialist, Edith Jones (from Jamaica) and an evaluation and measurement specialist Spring. Jones underlined that curriculum development was an ongoing process and, hence, all manuals were subject to change to keep up with a changing society. This led to the production of materials and the frequent revision of the curriculum, which stressed expression (word, music and dance).

Furthermore, Artsen told me that the local curriculum was divided into focal points for each grade. *Home* was the starting point. After that came *the community* (e.g. through news time, which was the practice whereby the pupils had to talk about news items as soon

413 MAC: Organization in school practice, 1983.

as the school day began). Those two themes were the thread running through the first three years of primary education. They had a book for the second year and Michael Morrison (another Jamaican) helped to develop a reader for the third year that was also used for social studies. The fourth year was about the Netherlands Antilles, the fifth about the Caribbean, and the sixth about the World.[414]

One of the elements which prevented full contextualization, was the fact that the mandatory exams did not take St. Maarten into account. Robertine pointed out: 'If I concentrated on SXM stuff, I would put my students in a disadvantageous position at the time of the exams. You could do extra assignments, but not more due to the exam regulations'.

While Harrigan was working at the Department of Education, different groups were involved in the curriculum development, such as VOBD[415] in The Netherlands and the BOMA project. Those organizations 'developed the curriculum and made sure that we had meetings with two parts of the system,' namely KG and the primary school, on the one hand, and continuing education, on the other hand. This process was motivated by the mismatch between primary education and the MAVO.[416] The brainstorming that took place then sought inspiration in a 1990 study done by Susan Kriskus. This way, curriculum development was shaped by the BOMA project, trends in the UK and the USA as well as the so-called *kerndoelen* [main objectives]. It resulted in a core curriculum, which was not worked out in detailed lesson plans. Or, as Harrigan put it: 'It was more of a basic thing to be learnt'.

Nevertheless, the functionality of similar projects was jeopardized by their lack of concrete applications. They remained at the level of mission statements, rather than with palpable and usable guidelines. This meant that the burden of change was laid on the teachers' shoulders. As Harrigan told me: 'There wasn't any standard place where you could find the data'. As a teacher, 'you were hoping that probably it would have gotten to the

414 This practice resembles the current curriculum for Foundation Based Education applied across primary schools in St. Maarten.

415 Vereniging van onderwijsbegeleidende diensten.

416 Interview with Quincy Harrigan.

stage where there would have been a social studies book written for SXM itself.'[417] This did not materialize, despite negotiations to that end with a company in Trinidad, which had realized this for other Caribbean islands. Pedagogically speaking, Harrigan found this situation wanting because teachers could not take children from the known (St. Maarten) to the unknown (the world). The printed school material often described a world that was alien to the pupils. The Internet age had not yet dawned; the necessary scaffolding to help pupils discover the world was not provided by the school, but by cable TV and tourism.

Besides governmental structural problems that hindered the contextualization of the curriculum, there were also practical obstacles. Harrigan stated: 'The problem that you were faced with was the cost. Because it was only SXM, one small island that you would've developing that book for. To the extent that even the Caribbean, even the British, Caribbean islands would be using the book is something that you couldn't expect. So, going into mass production for maybe a few hundred of those books was something that was at that time probably also impossible.'

According to the respondents to the questionnaire

In order to see how the curriculum was perceived by other people beside my interviewees, I had an extensive group of teachers, students and education administrators fill in a questionnaire. I shall now present my findings.

Teachers' perception of the curriculum and teaching materials

The questionnaire filled in by 88 teachers, both current and retired, suggested that teachers had mixed feelings about the curriculum and the materials which they used.

More than half the teachers (66 of them) answered that the curriculum was not in keeping with the lived experience of their students; 12 said that there was a limited match; and only 10 found it generally acceptable.

When asked about the origin of their teaching materials, only 9 stated that they were self-made. However, 23 said that it was produced on the Island and 11 that they used things designed in their own school. That would mean that a considerable amount of

417 Social Study books for St. Maarten (elementary education) have in the meantime been written already.

materials was locally designed. The rest of the teaching materials must have been in Dutch since 25 people said that they came from the Netherlands, 12 from the Antilles, and 8 from Suriname. 3 respondents could not quite remember exactly what the practice was.

Despite the low percentage of teachers, who developed their own texts and teaching aids, when asked about how free they were to do that, 49 of them replied that they had some or even a considerable amount of freedom to look for their teaching materials.

Therefore, the questionnaire seems to suggest that at least half the teachers thought that there was a mismatch between the local reality and the teaching materials being used and that they informally went in search of more adequate alternatives.

Pupils' perception of teaching materials

Our questionnaire was filled out by 320 students, both current and former ones. The pupils' perception was more negative than the teachers'. The great majority (198) failed to see any regular connection between what they had to study and their life. However, 122 of them were less negative in their judgment: 54 nuanced their stance by saying that there was a limited correlation between the curriculum and the local reality, while 42 deemed it to be on a general basis and 26 almost all of the time.

Former pupils said that their school books came from the school (88), St. Maarten (87), The Netherlands (54), the rest of the Antilles (49), the library (24), Suriname (14), or elsewhere (4). However, they thought that most things came from St. Maarten (88+87+24).

The management's perception of teaching materials

The questionnaire was also filled in by 58 members of the school management. When asked whether the curriculum was in keeping with the local reality, 30 replied that it was all or most of the time. The rest (28) deemed the curriculum only slightly or not at all adequate for St. Maarten schools.

When asked about how free they were to design the materials needed to deliver the school curriculum, 17 answered that they had a considerable degree of freedom and 21 some freedom. Given that only 20 respondents found that they were given little or no room for adaptation or improvement, I conclude that more than half the respondents were aware that people could do more locally if they so wished.

Even though 22 respondents thought that the teaching materials came from the Netherlands, 15 said that they originated either in St. Maarten (11) or even in the school itself (4). When this answer is combined with the others that indicated that curricular aids were imported from the rest of the Antilles (9) and Suriname (5), it would appear that a considerable amount of materials were from the region. To that, it may be added that 7 people referred to other undefined sources (given the links between the Island and North America, they may have been American books).

This data once again suggest two things: 1) that a serious degree of contextualization of the curriculum took place and 2) that this was a natural rather than a structural process. It took place because of the initiative of local educationalists.

The Governmental personnel perception of teaching materials

The picture that emerges from the answers to the questionnaire given by governmental personnel (64) shows a higher degree of pessimism. Only 17 of them opined that the curriculum was mostly (10) or generally (7) attuned to the local reality. The majority found it slightly (18) or even seriously (29) inadequate.

As we try to interpret this data, we speculate that their reaction may have been the result of 1) either a lack of knowledge of what educators were actually doing at the school level or (2) of their greater insight into the decision-making processes within Netherlands Antilles (Curaçao) —or, maybe, a combination of both factors. This point shows that it is impossible to speak about education in St. Maarten between 1954 and 2000 without acknowledging the influence of the Netherlands Antilles and above all of Curaçao.

Common denominators

The element, which former teachers, students and education administrators shared, is their awareness that changes were needed. However, both the interviews and the questionnaires showed that 'the information and the materials were not there. That is so even now. Now we have internet, but that was not there 20, 30 or 40 years ago. You had more information in Holland than here. The few people who were willing probably found their material in the Netherlands. In the 80s, the first textbooks appeared in English for the Anglophone Caribbean and they came from the University of the West Indies. Once that was there, you

could translate it and use it. But still it did not have the SXM aspect in it. There was material around but officially it was not'.[418]

The need to contextualize education was increasingly becoming a broadly-perceived priority, but it needed to take structural shape. It had so far remained a personal endeavor, rather than insular level policy. Later on, in the first decade of the new millennium, this vacuum would be filled in by BERPPI.

The arrival of cable TV

As mentioned earlier, the arrival of cable TV was a big change in itself and one that ushered in a new mentality. One of our interviewees underlined this, saying: 'I think that the biggest change that has had consequences for education was the bringing in of cable TV in 1986'. Cable TV was a window onto the world but, at the same time, it changed the expectations of the people. The reason for this was simple: 'If on the TV you see a certain lifestyle, which does not fit your community, yet, which is reinforced by a tourist economy, then, you think that life is a vacation, that you are only supposed to spend money to enjoy yourself. Doing things for free, doing voluntary work, and other community values, which were there before, are reflected neither on the TV nor in the tourist economy'. Adults changed, and so did children.[419]

The influence of cable TV,420 combined with tourism and the increase of immigration which the tourist boom occasioned, altered the traditional social relationships of the community. Once you do not know each other anymore, crime becomes more anonymous and mistrust is born.

Antilleanization

One of the signs that the Antillean government had become aware of the need to contextualize the administration and education of the Dutch Antilles was the so-called

418 This was an interviewee, who preferred to remain anonymous.

419 George, M. & Van Enckevort, M. (2011).

420 Francio mentioned beside tv. also the newspapers as a medium of black awareness. Guadeloupe, F. (2005). *Chanting Down the New Jerusalem*, pp. 31-35.

'Antilleanization of education' program. It was an option with both a broad and a narrow perspective. On the one hand, it aimed at changing the existing system in content and structure; on the other, it sought to make the changes and adaptations of the content of education without a clear idea of the needs of the different Antillean societies.

The documents[421] favored the broad perspective. Antillean law preferred that jobs should go to local people. One of our interviewees experienced this first hand. 'I was hired in 1982 for three years and in 1985 they could not rehire me, although they wanted to, because an Antillean person had applied for the same position. I don't know what law it was, but if an Antillean applied for a position in education with the same qualifications of a European Dutch, the Antillean should be hired. However, my immigration papers said that as long as I was employed by a school board, I could stay on the Island'.

Some of our interviewees found that mandatory Antilleanization brought the level of education down. Our previous interviewee relativized that view, saying that 'people should go and check per subject whether students got better results when they had Dutch teachers. I think that that is a tricky statement to make that *Antillianisering* lowered the results of the system. If you say that, then you have to compare it with the other phenomenon since the Dutch slowly moved into the CXC system, too. Have they contributed to the deterioration of the capability to speak English? The Surinamese, for instance, they have not been trained to teach in English, but they do, while their command of English is not enough to teach the children to speak proper English. So I am not so sure about Antilleanization.'

Regardless of the official Antilleanization thrust, it was still necessary to hire educators from abroad. Since people still went to the Netherlands for further studies, Dutch training was still considered desirable, if not necessary, at least for secondary education.

In the case of the Secondary education (VWO), foreign teachers who came to the Island on three-year contracts had the additional problem that most of them did not have a good understanding of the culture, background and history of SXM. Since they would only be on the Island for 3 years, they did not feel a strong commitment to the community. Furthermore, many of the students were not SXM students, either. Once they had finished

421 Departement van Onderwijs (1982), pp. 73-74.

secondary education, they went on to university elsewhere and never came back to SXM. As one of our interviewees indicated, that meant that the Island was paying 'a lot of money for an elitist system', whose fruits you did not always see. 'It would have been better' —she went on— 'to have set up a proper vocational school for SXM. But that is hindsight. At the time, you didn't know.'

Although Antilleanization was a general policy, some of our interviewees suggested that there was insufficient noticeable coordination within the Department of Education, both on the Federal and local levels. It often happened that those different groups would work on the same problem, but from different perspectives.[422]

Influence of Curaçao on St. Maarten's education

Even though the constitutional makeup of the Kingdom of the Netherlands changed in 1954, it would take decades before those changes would trickle down into all areas of government and of community building.

According to Haddock, in the 1960s everything was still 'very Dutch, even the language of instruction'. His recollection of the past agrees with my analysis of the questionnaire: 'The changes had a lot to do with the person who was in charge'. Furthermore, he also indicated that the lack of structural contextualization meant that 'the changes were not fundamental'.[423] This dearth of structurally planned and executed change was noticeable to Larmonie in his capacity of inspector: 'A lot of teachers invested their own money in their teaching. This was good but meant that there was no uniform system in place. Besides, foreign teachers used their own material, depending where they came from.' And at a deeper level of analysis, it must also be recognized, as Larmonie suggested, that in those days 'teachers had not been trained to plan and develop a curriculum. They lacked the expertise.'

422 Departement van Onderwijs (1982), p. 74.

423 Fifty years on, Haddock remains critical, even in light of current *structural* developments. For, according to him, now 'a lot of emphasis is put on English. A lot has been lost. A lot has to do with the methods. In many ways, we have taken over what Holland wants [= FBE]. Still we are in some ways always behind.'

The questionnaires repeatedly indicated that Curaçao was not only a constitutional heavyweight within the Netherlands Antilles, but also a source of curricular materials. The fact that St. Maarten's schools found Curaçao teaching aids more adequate than Dutch ones — despite the geographical and language mismatch between the two islands — shows indirectly that Curaçao had undergone its own contextualizing process, and was a step ahead. Catholic educationalists had played an important role in those changes. In fact, while in St. Maarten, the Dominican Sisters of Voorschoten stood out as founders of schools, in Curaçao, the Fraters of Tilburg had become a force of curricular reform. Snijders referred to this, saying: 'We owe a lot to the Catholic Friars in Curaçao. We introduced *Nos Patria*, *Nos Tera* en *Zonnig Nederlands*. They were all developed by the Catholic Friars in Curaçao. They were all from an Antillean perspective. Before *Zonnig Nederlands*, we had something else.' Larmonie told me that Frater Anton (from *Zonnig Nederlands*) helped them in St. Maarten to develop a method for the Island.

Snijders goes on to compare the initiatives in St. Maarten and those in Curaçao: 'In those days we used to make stencils. The effort was enormous, but if you give a stencil to a child, after three weeks, how does it look? Awful! (…) 'but if you have a nice little book with color pictures of the family or a goat, it looks much better for a longer time'. This underlines the frequent mention of the lack of structural change in St. Maarten. Even though, as Snijders told me, the 'government also had an office where stencils could be produced in big quantities,' the step from loose stencils to the structural mass production of books still had to be taken. And when books were used, Snijders goes on, they had a drawback: 'Most books were from Holland, and transplanted here. All the texts and pictures were from and about Holland. Trying to adapt the material to the Island called for a lot of extra work on the part of the teachers'.

It transpired during the interviews that Curaçao's influence was multilayered in St. Maarten. On the one hand, Curaçao was a trail-blazer (especially the Friars of Tilburg) as pointed out by Snijder, but on the other, it was also perceived as an obstacle (as head of the Dutch Antillean government). During our interview, Buncamper stressed this latter point. She found that there was too much material and, very often, useless since it had been

written by people who were not in education.[424] Larmonie also underlined this negative influence of Curaçao on St. Maarten's education. As a St. Maarten inspector, 'he had to implement Federal policy,' while, at the same time, 'he tolerated developments towards English as a language of instruction, e.g. at the MAC.'

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that there is a general feeling in St. Maarten that the old curriculum was inadequate, but that since 1954, it has been evolving. There was a two-fold process: the more St. Maarten came of age as a national community apart from Curaçao and the Netherlands, the greater the awareness that education had to change and that the people on the Island had to do it themselves.

Initially, educators in St. Maarten borrowed heavily from the methods and books used in The Netherlands. For subjects like arithmetic and dictation, not much adaptation was needed;[425] however, for subjects like geography and history, a noticeable socio-geographical disconnection was felt.

As the Kingdom Charter became a structural reality and federal policies were set in place, Dutch influence was increasingly replaced by Curaçao's heavy-weight presence in the Netherlands Antilles.

With the arrival of cable TV, tourism and large groups of immigrants, the Island's horizons could not but expand, and new links were forged.[426] The increasing exposure of the

424 'De meeste obstakels kwamen door Curaçao. They lorded it over us. Ook qua materialen kan hier niet alles uit Curaçao gebruikt worden. Wat voorgeschreven werd op Curaçao, werd gedaan door mensen die niet in het onderwijs werkten.'

425 Sr. Marie Laurence: "Ik zei net we hebben die boeken ook op St. Maarten gehad maar die waren niet zo zeer voor de bovenwinden, want dat merkten wij bij dingen die niet pasten op St. Maarten maar rekenen hadden wij altijd methoden uit Nederland. In 1953 al". Zr. Constance: "Voor dictee hadden wij een Amerikaans dictee boek".

426 At this juncture, one can also mention the negative aspects, i.e. breakdown of community and volunteerism; the problems of rising expectations and inability to meet them; or also the tensions created by the fabricated 'ideals' and living conditions of TV and life-styles of tourists and the socio-economic reality of

Island to the world would gradually bring about a more nuanced mix of Dutch, North American, Caribbean and local insights, tendencies and teaching materials. The MAC played an important role in that process.[427]

As for teaching materials, while in Curaçao some of the teachers —stimulated by government subsidies and financing— developed materials and schoolbooks which were published and marketed[428] in St. Maarten, these initiatives remained rather at the level of personal endeavors of committed teachers, who possessed a broader academic background.

Hodge's evaluation of education in St. Maarten between 1954 and 2000 is that it took cognitive areas into consideration, but neglected the development of the people as a people or a national entity. People knew things and honed skills, but there was a lack of proper thought about educating St. Maarteners as a community and a country. To those who underline that the indigenous element was underplayed, he answered that the priorities were different in those days. You had to implement curricula which could promote the pupils employability. Accounting, languages, Dutch: those were the subjects which opened doors and secured employment. Furthermore, Hodge raised the rhetorical question of who the teachers were. 'You can't blame anybody. Who were the teachers? Nuns. They were white people from abroad and could only transfer knowledge. They could never see or say what people were going to need in the future. Ideally, they should have done that but because of a number of factors, they did not (could not) do it; for instance, because of the curriculum that they themselves had to teach. We must be realistic about that.' During another interview, Buncamper expressed the same opinion almost verbatim.

Nonetheless, time has not stood still. Current school programs indicate that St. Maarten educationalists have become increasingly aware of the international context of

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the Island. Furthermore the negative impact of TV and tourism. Thus also tensions between 'images' and reality on the ground. Since there was not an attempt to forge a 'national identity' this was left to chance and 'market forces'.

427 MAC: Organization in school practice, 1983.

428 Departement van Onderwijs (1982), pp. 89-97.

their life and the importance of gearing their practice toward the Island's future. This comes literally to the fore in the MAC's educational project:[429]

> 'In an increasingly technological world, the Mathematics skills of the nation's workers may be a crucial component of economic competiveness.[430] (…) the ability to read is a minimum requirement to participate productively in a global economy and to fulfill basic civic responsibilities.[431] (…) In the future, poor readers may also find it difficult to participate effectively in an economy requiring increasingly job skills'.[432] (…) one important goal of education is for all persons to acquire and develop skills to function effectively and productively in society. The youth of today will be tomorrow's leader. The quality of their leadership in the home, workplace, business, government and the community at large will depend on the social skills acquired and developed'.[433] (…) 'competence in Science is an important outcome of education. The ability to apply scientific information, interpret data, and make inferences about scientific findings is required in a world which relies heavily on technological and scientific advances'.[434]

It appears to me that a factor that is more conspicuously absent in the process is the explicit communication and cross-pollination between the Dutch and French sides of the Island. No one ever mentioned their immediate northern neighbors as a source of ideas or even for teaching materials. The discussion in St. Maarten between the supporters of either Dutch or English seems to have obliterated the question whether French should play any role at all in the process. This is even more interesting considering the arrival of the large community of French-speaking Haitian immigrants. Future studies should perhaps look into this issue in more detail as well as the position of Spanish, after the arrival of immigrants from the Dominican Republic. French and Spanish are, after all, the two other languages beside English, which influence the culture and history of St. Maarten within the context of its most immediate Caribbean surroundings.

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429 Spring, C. (1999). *The Condition of Education in the Methodist Agogig Centre 1976-1999*", pages 40 and following.

430 P. 40.

431 P. 46.

432 P. 52.

433 P. 56.

434 P. 62.

VARIABLES OF SCHOOLING

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we shall deal with social variables belonging to the level of schooling in St. Maarten: parents, their background and involvement in the educational process; the inspectorate, their function and influence on the curriculum; dropouts: which type of students dropped out of school and why; teacher training and the origin of non-St. Maarten born teachers; and the relationship between the teachers and the school management.

In each section we will seek to answer the following questions. What were the local perceptions of the events? (This will be based on the interviews and questionnaires which we conducted.) And, did those events contribute to the development of one or various St. Maarten identities and if they did, in which ways?

PARENTS

Why study the role of parents in education?

The role of parents in education is a study in its own right. Parents' influence in their children's education is as valid a research question as any other -- also as a historical question. Studies in the area of pedagogical sciences have underlined the importance of parents and their influence on their children's education.

However, although genetics influence children's intelligence, the environment constitutes a better ground for children to be equipped with intellectual stimulants.[435] Hereditary intelligence as well as the socio-economic and cultural position of the parents can enhance or thwart children's development, either directly or indirectly.[436] Furthermore,

435 Cfr. Bouchard, T. & McGue, M (1982). Familial studies of intelligence: A review, in *Science* (212), pp. 1055–1059; Plomin, R. (1997). *Behavioral genetics*. New York: Freeman: Plomin, R., De Fries, J. & Loehlin, J. C (1977). Genotype-environment interaction and correlation in the analysis of human behaviour, in *Psychological Bulletin* (84), pp. 309–322.

436 Cfr. Graaf, M. (1986). The impact of financial and cultural resources on educational attainment in the

each family has its own cultural and pedagogical climate, which includes language, friends, the degree of schooling enjoyed by the neighborhood and the region, the characteristics of the school, etc.[437]

One theory that explains the interaction between education and the parental variable is provided by the *Wisconsin Model*. It suggests that social origin; significant others; the professional status and salary of the parents; the level of schooling reached by family members; the educational aspiration of parents, pupils and their peers; and the appropriateness of the school, which the pupils attend, are all interconnected and can lead to divergent school results.[438]

Parental involvement usually leads to better school attendance, increased motivation and better self-esteem. When parents are on top of things, the rates of suspension, truancy and drop-outs are lower.[439]

In 1982, Laosa suggested that there is a correlation between the schooling that individuals receive and their interaction at home, especially with parents. Furthermore, this researcher forwarded the hypothesis that regardless of ethnicity, the home-school discontinuity will be more marked in homes where the parents had relatively low schooling.[440] In other words, the home and the classroom (as *pars pro toto*) will be seen as two separate worlds. However, Laosa further opined that schooling has a long lasting effect on a person's behavioral dispositions, e.g. how a person acts as a parent, which basically

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Netherlands, in *Sociology of* Education (59), pp. 237 – 246.

437 Cfr. Dronkers, J. (1986). Onderwijs en sociale ongelijkheid in Van kemenade, Lagerwey, N. (eds.) (1986). *Onderwijs: bestel en beleid. Onderwijs en samenleving.,* Groningen: Wolters Noordhoff, pp. 42-151.

438 Sewell, W. & Hauser, R. (1980). The Wisconsin longitudinal study of social and psychological factors in aspirations and achievements in Kerckhoff, A. (ed.) (1980). *Research in sociology of education and socialisation.* Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, pp. 59-101, p. 72.

439 Fergus, H. (2003), p. 70.

440 Cfr. Laosa, L. (1982). School, Occupation, Culture, and Family: The Impact of Parental Schooling on the Parent-Child Relationship. In *Journal of Educational Psychology* (74: 6), pp. 791-827.

means that their education will be more influential than their occupation.[441] This may be so because parents, who have been schooled better and longer, will tend to place a greater value on education and be more involved in the school performance of their children.[442]

Beside the school-home discontinuity, children from poorer or less influential segments of the population often share another feature: their parents have to compete for the least socially appreciated jobs.[443] The acquisitive power of families' conditions, often determines the financial resources of parents to pay tuition fees, books and extracurricular activities. The apparent lack of motivation and poor school performance of pupils from low-income families is, therefore, not always a result of laziness or a lack of personal commitment.[444] However, when one considers the importance of having the means to gain access to qualitative schooling, it becomes increasingly manifest that education

overgang kan verwerken ... taal. Doorgaan in de moedertaal is des te gemakkelijker ter ... dit dan ook als heel goed mogelijk.

Zr. Lambertha wil meer aandacht van de ouders

DERTIEN JAAR lang is Zuster Lambertha al hoofd van de grootste katholieke basisschool op St Maarten. Toen ze in 1968 naar St Maarten kwam begon precies in dat jaar de MAVO. Zowel Mavo als de lagere school stonden onder leiding van Zuster Borgia. Toen er een apart hoofd moest komen voor de lagere school werd zuster Lambertha benoemd. In die dertien jaren heeft Zuster Lambertha wel het een en ander zien veranderen in het onderwijs hier. Wat vindt zij van deze veranderingen?

"Het is allereerst goed geweest dat de lagere school los kwam van de Mavo, waardoor meer aandacht werd besteed aan dit type Onderwijs. Vroeger keken we teveel naar de top en verwaarloosden de lagere school. In het begin was de Josephschool verdeeld in verschillende straten. Enkele gebouwen waren in de Frontstreet en andere weer in de Backstreet. Nu is alles teruggebracht in één gebouw. Dit is een enorm winstpunt". Ook ziet Zuster Lambertha de omschakeling van het Nederlands naar het Engels in de eerste en tweede klassen als een groot voordeel voor de kleintjes. Verder zegt ze blij te zijn dat het gouvernement begrip heeft getoond voor het feit dat diensturen echt nodig zijn. Het bestaat namelijk niet dat je een school met 17 klassen moet runnen en daarbij de hele dag moet lesgeven ook. Toen de school 17 klassen telde stond ik nog voor een hele volle klas. Met 18 klassen zag ook het Gouvernement zelf wel in dat dat niet meer kon. Zuster Lambertha geeft nu nog elke dag les aan alle klassen. Dat vindt zij zelf fijn want dan leer je alle leerlingen kennen en kom je ook vaker in contact met je leerlingen. Zij geeft handenarbeid en handwerken. "Ik vind het ongezond dat nu dat ik maar tien klassen heb, de hele dag niets meer doe aan lesgeven".

Zuster Lambertha, hoofd St Josephschool.

Zuster Lambertha hoopt vurig dat een van de eerstvolgende veranderingen zal zijn een goede school met gymzaal: "want sinds 1948 is mijn school afgekeurd".

BOODSCHAP

"Ik hoop dat de levensomstandigheden op St Maarten binnen niet al te lange tijd, zodanig veranderen dat het niet meer noodzakelijk is dat beide ouders gedwongen worden om buitenshuis te werken, zodat er altijd wel een van de ouders thuis is om de kinderen op te vangen. De school is maar een klein onderdeel van de opvoeding en hopelijk dat de ouders meer tijd gegund worden om ook aan deze grootste en moeilijke taak te kunnen werken".

441 Cfr. Laosa, L. (1978). Maternal teaching strategies in Chicano families of varied educational and socioeconomic levels, in *Child Development* (49), pp. 1129–1135.

442 Cfr. Kohl, G. (et.al.) (2000). Parent involvement in school: Conceptualizing multiple dimensions and their relations with family and demographic risk factors, in *Journal of School Psychology* (38: 6), pp. 501–523.

443 Davis-Kean, P. (2005). The Influence of Parent Education and Family Income on Child Achievement: The Indirect Role of Parental Expectations and the Home Environment in *Journal of Family Psychology* (19: 2), pp. 294–304.

444 Cfr. Alexander, K. & Entwisle, D. (1996). Schools and children at risk, in Booth, A. & Dunn, J. (Eds.) (1996). *Family–school links: How do they affect educational outcomes?.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, pp. 67–88.

alone is not enough; inequality and its repercussions must be overcome structurally.[445]

The interviews

Our interviews revealed that in St. Maarten, participation and working together diminished the space between school and home. There was a good cooperation between teachers and parents. Different perspectives on this topic agreed this view. Stevens finds personally that "I always had a lot of cooperation from the parents. You felt very good, because not only did the child depend on you, the parents did too. So you had a double thing. They respected you so much, which I didn't mind. In the very beginning, when we came, parents would watch you so much that your children couldn't cross the Front Street. You had the respect". Furthermore, she continues: "There were a lot of teachers who would visit the parents in their homes. Parents were so honored with their visit. Now teachers would be so scared to go to some places. Those were other times. We did not even lock our houses. There were things that were like *voorschriften*, you know, you just had to abide by them." Artsen agreed with this and insists that "the rapport with the parents was good. The parents had time and if they played too low a key, Snijders would go to visit them". The visits from Snijders to the parents seemed like a very influential tool.

As Connor mentioned in her interview, "the parents would often be in Curaçao or Aruba in the refineries. The kids were here with their grandparents. All St. Maarteners and a lot from French Quarter: these children were among the most dedicated. You didn't need to tell them to study." This climate can be seen as the driving force to do well in school. In other words, there appears to be a correlation between a child's environment and his or her educational chances. The family situation in 50s and 60s was traditional and the extended family was part of the upbringing. Being a single parent was not a common phenomenon. According to Stevens, "in those days, if it happened, it was a great shame, for a girl to get pregnant. And those who did not have a father had their grandparents. You had a backup, you know."

445 Mendez, J. & Fogle, L. (2002). Parental reports of preschool children's social behavior: Relations among peer play, language competence and problem behaviour, in *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment* (20), pp. 374–389. Cfr. Slaughter-Defoe, D (1995). Revisiting the concept of socialization: Caregiving and teaching in the 90s: A personal perspective, in *American Psychologist* (50), pp. 276–286.

The Sisters were also aware of the importance of parental influence in education. Back in the sixties, Sr. Lamberta already emphasized both the importance of using the mother tongue in the early years and of the need for parent to be able to help their children with homework, etc… (see newspaper article).

Lourens found that the parental situation changed throughout the decades; for "it was reflective of the society, you know. There were times when most of the children would have had both parents, but I think that at this time, you will find that most are of single parents." This of course had implications for the student and their educational input.

Lourens and Hodge found that the participation of parents in school activities were on a high level. "Yes, we normally had at least 80-85% of the parents when we had the multicultural day," Lourens mentioned. Hodge in other words, confirmed this but also thought that the types of parents needed to be distinguished. "There were two types of parents: the local and the foreign ones. Local parents supported teachers. They backed up whatever teachers wanted to do, even disciplining the pupils. The locals felt, however, that they were mostly not capable of helping with the *organization* of activities, due to a feeling of unpreparedness (that they were not up to it). Having said that, sometimes, 80% of the parents would turn out (*presence*) for activities, though."

Hodge used extra-curricular activities to involve the parents. As he indicated to us, when he was a teacher/principal, he found that there was a "very strong parents' participation (PTA): that was something I insisted on. The parents had to have a say. In terms of other innovations, they were sent down and discussed on the Island. Like the McKay process." He believed that having the parents on board was a good thing "my philosophy was that once you had the parents, half the education task was underway. We used to take children to St. Barths, etc. That was unheard of at the time. The school board did not always understand that. Parents did not really know what was going on in school in curricular matters."

Our research on the development of education and its impact on society and students showed that the St. Maarten community was both large and small at the same time. Most people knew each other and the upbringing of children was almost a community affair. Everyone would try to help where possible. Parents were usually busy with their jobs, but also involved in their children's education, especially where the teachers were

concerned. In Stevens' words, "It was a different mentality. Parents cared about the teachers; they respected them. If you disciplined a child, the parent would come and add a little extra to it. In those days, there was no problem if the parents came in and gave the child a little … in front of everybody, because the child should listen to the teacher. They were very strict on discipline."

The financial background can also be an external factor weighing down on the educational outcomes. In St. Maarten, there were initially "no school fees," Hodges told us. "Later on, Sr. Regina's school introduced minimum fees. However, parents who, you knew, could not pay them were exempted from payment". Lourens added: "Well if you look at their ability to pay the school fees, then, it was mostly the upper middle class." Connor remembered that when she was she a student herself, children used to walk to school and a lot of them used to come barefoot. The nuns used to give them clothes. Hodge, too, stressed that in his eyes the nuns were part of the caring network.

As seen in the discussion on the curricula, although the subjects and curriculum were not always in synch with the island life, most of the interviewees found that they had been well prepared for employment after school. This aspect of education is one of the variables that link the role of parents in their children's education and the position of those children when they become parents themselves. It is at that juncture that cultural capital is created. According to Bourdieu,[446] cultural capital is *embodied* in competences and skills, objectified in cultural products such as texts and institutionalized in terms of certificates and diplomas.

Parents with a certain cultural capital will seek to live in neighborhoods of similar people, which will create an environment that is more or less conducive to educational success.[447] Moreover, pupils and students, whose parents are regularly involved in their

446 Cfr. Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital in Richardson, J. (Ed.), in *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education.* New York: Greenwood Press, pp. 241–258.

447 Cfr. Aber, J., Gephart, M., Brooks-Gunn, J. & Connell, J. (1997). Development in context: Implications for studying neighborhood effects, in Brooks-Gunn, J., Duncan, H. & Aber, J. (Eds. (1997). *Neighborhood poverty: Context and consequences for children* (1), New York: Russell Sage Foundation, pp. 44–61.

education, usually have higher grades, test scores and graduation.[448] And, in contrast, single parents who must fulfill several roles in the home will often have less time to get involved in the education of all of their children equally.[449] In short, the position of a pupil or student in society is not only influenced by his or her parents' financial capital, but also by their cultural capital, namely their skills, participation in what is seen as culture and qualifications. That is why it has been indicated that parents' scarcity of cultural capital often translates itself into their children's academic attainment.[450]

Nevertheless, although family background both influences and reflects the choices people make, the education network can open up new windows of possibility for pupils and students. Hodge was an example of this. He was born to a simple family as he explained in when asked about the parental home situation.[451] His parents were not married. He was intellectually able and knew that he would have to leave the Island if he was to break through the circle of poverty. However, his family situation did not allow for this, since his father died and he had to look after his mother. So, when he heard that radio repairers were needed, he told his grandmother (who brought him up), that he'd go to Aruba to learn how to do it. However, some of the nuns saw that he could do more. Sr. Magda told him that

448 Rose, I., Gallup, A. & Elam, S.. The 29th annual Phi Delta Kappan/Gallup Poll of the public's attitude toward the public schools, in *Phi Delta Kappan* (79): 1), pp. 41-56.

449 Epstein, J. (1984). *Single parents and the schools: Effects of marital status on parent and teacher evaluation* (Rep. No. 353). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Social Organization of Schools.

450 Idem Bourdieu, 1986.

451 "My mother was born in Anguilla but came from St Kitts. She worked for a number of years as domestic. My father was a clever man, though I did not know what his education had been like. They were both highly appreciated in the community. He could read and write and do Maths. He was also a skilled artisan. He was the only one who could make nets, when he was not delivering telegrams. His social studies were okay, but in those days, he would do anything for his friends. When he died, we learnt that he had accumulated debts that were not really his. In a way, he was trying to buy friends. In his latter days, he would drink much. Apparently, he died of fish poison, which he ate and killed him. My mother worked on the island. He left me here and went to work in Curaçao. After coming back, we was taken ill with cancer and eventually died in hospital. While I was in Holland, she was in hospital. (I think he said that he got a cow from his mother, which he used to pay for hospital.) My mother was a very caring woman. She had three children, two girls and me. My father had two other sons (as an Antillean man) and two other daughters."

she had different plans for him, but he was 16 and did not quite understand what she meant. However, it all became clear the day this Sister called him in and broke the news to him: He would be leaving for The Netherlands the following week to study and become a teacher. Hodges told us that this offer never felt like an imposition because in those days, when one became a teacher, one acquired not only cultural, but also social capital. Education paid a decent salary and conferred a high standing in society. The nuns paid for his studies in The Netherlands for a whole year. After that, he got study financing. When he arrived in the Netherlands, other nuns welcomed him and put him on a train to Maastricht. He was welcomed by a lady, who had become senile at the age of 45 and would provide him with accommodation. He went to the teacher's training college and majored in Math, French, and German. He completed the training in four years and became a teacher.

Moreover, parents contribute to the development of the identity of their children. When we look at Stevens' case, Asha mentioned that even though they were initially poor , as a family, they were well integrated in the society. The Christian Hillside school did not stand above the parents, but within the community. She finds that "the designer clothes were not there. I had to learn to sew. You would see my children wearing the dresses that I had made. It was fun. And the parents liked that, because I was one of the people. I was not going to buy what they could not afford. And I would also make clothes for other people, too. (…) When we were living on Marygold Hill Road, we were taken up by the people as if we were one of them. Even my former husband —Snijders— who has a white color was never really left out."

The testimony of the Stevens' family resounded across the interviews. In the home as well as at school, the identity of belonging to the Island (and a given Christian community) was promoted. However, it was a tacit identity of belonging by participation, rather than an explicit identity of separation of us over against them. In the later years, probably under the influence of the European nationalistic discourse and the experience of the Antillean diaspora in the Netherlands, the compartmentalization of identity rose. In Asha's words, "There were never really St. Maarten flags. Now the Haitians have their flags, the Curaçao people have theirs. You know what I'm saying? It shouldn't be so. We should not be so segmented. Like now, everybody has their flag. There are some things that people

should learn to abide by because *this is* the Island that they have chosen to come and live in."

The questionnaire

Our questionnaire also revealed how the respondents felt about the parents, homes, family configuration and participation.

Family configuration

As for the family situation or configuration of the pupils/students, there seems to be a mismatch between what former teachers and the management indicated and the perception of the students or pupils.

For the then adult school population, most students either lived with their single mother or another relative. A smaller group lived with their single father. A few lived with both parents and even fewer were orphans. Students had a different recollection. Most of the respondents said that they lived with both parents (147), some with a single mother (67) and a smaller group with a single father (23). Others lived with a relative other than either of their parents (45). There was a smaller group of orphans (16). When talking about the family situation of their classmates, former students gave slightly different figures, although the general picture is quite similar to their own. Most of their classmates allegedly lived with both parents (191) and the rest either with their single mother (45) or with their single father (26). Others either lived with another relative (47) or were orphans (11).

Level of parents' formal education

The picture of the parents' level of schooling, which emerged from the questionnaires conducted amongst former teachers, students and management personnel, is that most parents had some degree of schooling, e.g primary education and some secondary education. There were also two smaller groups of parents, who either had not been to school at all or were highly educated.

The parents' financial background

When asked about the parents' financial background, most teachers, former students and management staff said that students came from homes that ranged from modest, but well

enough to comfortable. There was also a small group of pupils/students, who led more than comfortable lives and another group of children, who were below the poverty line.[452]

Parents' participation in children's schooling

The former teachers and school management employees, who filled in the questionnaire, indicated that parental participation was mostly a reaction to school initiatives, for example, at the beginning or end of the school year or on a teacher's request. Apparently, a small group did not get involved at all, while a slightly larger group would spontaneously and repeatedly approach the school in relation to their children's education. This suggests that, for the most part, most parents were in contact with their children's school at moments when they thought that they were expected to be involved. When we combine these figures with those of parents with high degrees of involvement, we can conclude that the parents who remained completely absent were a minority. Further study could investigate why most parents limited their participation. There might have been a correlation between participation, educational background and financial situation. Further studies could investigate whether the parents, who had had more schooling and were more financially comfortable were the same as those who took a more active and official role in the schooling process of their children.

DROPOUTS

Research shows that dropouts are a world-wide phenomenon resulting from different variables.[453] For instance, it may be due to conditions at school (e.g. policy, mentality, ethnic

452 Future research could analyze our statistical data transversally and per school. That way, one could identify a number of factors, e.g. the type of student population per school, whether that variable influenced the participation of their parents in their schooling process, whether the social background combined with parental participation led to better results, etc.

453 Cfr. Levy, M. (1971). Determinants of Primary School Dropouts in Developing Countries, in *Comparative Education Review*, (15:1),pp. 44-58. Cfr. Rumberger, R. (1983). High school dropout: A review of issues and evidence, in *Review of Educational Research* (57), pp. 101-121. Cfr. Fine, M. & Rosenberg, P. (1983). Dropping out: The ideology of school and work, in *Journal of Education* (165), pp. 357-272. Cfr. Fine, M. (1991). *Framing dropouts: Notes on the politics of urban public high school*. Albany: State University of New York Press. Cfr.

bias, language of instruction, teachers, etc.), personal traits, the home situation (e.g. the parents' educational background and acquisitive power), geo-social factors (e.g. distance from school, social unrest, times of urgent financial needs, etc.), etc.

UNESCO's country report of the Netherlands Antilles described dropout as "the premature renouncement of school without achieving the minimum qualification necessary."[454] Concretely, a dropout is "a youngster who leaves the education system without obtaining a BVO or a MAVO diploma."[455]

The issue of dropouts is connected to illiteracy and adult education in some cases, but not always or, at least, not essentially. As for dropouts and illiteracy, they will be classed as absolute or functional illiterates depending on the educational phase during which pupils or students drop out of the schooling system. As for dropouts and adult education, not every dropout will join adult education programs, nor is every student in adult learning centers a dropout (or an illiterate either).

Furthermore, children and teenagers leave the schooling system for different reasons, for instance, to join the workforce because their situation has changed (e.g. due to migration, natural catastrophes, conflict, etc.) or simply because they were expelled from school. Poor infrastructure, like overcrowded classrooms, as Connor mentioned, can be a reason for dropping out. Poor infrastructure and other factors (such as teachers, who are not able to handle the situation, under-qualified teachers and insufficient learning) are other reasons.[456]

Barnes, A. (1992). *Retention of African American males in high school: A study of African-American male high school dropouts, African American male seniors and white male seniors*. Lanham: University Press of America. Cfr. Dehli, K. (1996). Unfinished business?: The dropout goes to work in education policy reports in Kelly, D., & Gaskell, J. (Eds) (1996). *Debating dropouts: Critical policy and research perspectives on school leaving*. New York: Teachers College Press, pp.7-29. Cfr. Dorn, S. (1996). *Creating the dropout: An institutional and social history of school failure*. Westport: Praeger Publishers.

454 http://www.unesco.org/education/wef/countryreports/netherlands_antilles/rapport_2_1.html (Accessed on 13 May 2012).

455 Country report Netherlands Antilles (2009), p. 80.

456 Alexander, R. (2008). Education for All, the Quality Imperative and the Problem of Pedagogy. In *CREATE Pathways to Access* (20). Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity: University of

School systems can also demotivate learners, resulting in their dropping out of school. There are several phenomena, which can fall under the 'system'. For example, when students of different ages are mixed together in single classrooms, some of them may feel out of place and end up leaving school. If the curriculum is not in line with the contextual reality, it can also discourage students' engagement.[457]

Furthermore, the UNESCO country report indicates that "the reasons that lead to drop outs are many. The more prevalent factors are: social developments and circumstances, the educational system does not provide equal opportunities for all children, alarming pregnancy among the youth, children from immigrant families drop our more frequently than the Antilleans and personal traits. The research has shown a total of 23% drop out rate with more male than female drop outs."[458] Thus "such schooling circumstances, together with personal and family level factors such as ill-health, malnutrition and poverty, jeopardize meaningful access to education for many children. As a result, many children are registered in schools but fail to attend, participate but fail to learn, are enrolled for several years but fail to progress and drop out from school".[459]

The above indicates that speaking about formal education includes paying attention to those who leave it. Hence, we shall now deal with the issue of dropouts in St. Maarten between 1954 and 2000.

Before 1954

Voges told us that before the Kingdom's Charter, migration in the 1920s and 1930s, was especially for the USA, Aruba, and Curaçao. A lot of people went to work in the Panama

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Sussex.

457 Little, A.W. (2008). Size matters for EFA. In *CREATE Pathways to Access* (26). Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity: University of Sussex.

458 http://www.unesco.org/education/wef/countryreports/netherlands_antilles/rapport_2_1.html (Accessed on 13 May 2012).

459 Sabates, R., Akyeampong, K. Westbrook, K. & Hunt, F. (2010). School Dropout: Patterns, Causes, Changes and Policies.,. Background paper prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011. *The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education,* p. 3.

Canal, Cuba, Santo Domingo, and French Guyana. There were also salt workers, who went to Nova Scotia following the salt track.

After the Kingdom's Charter

Haddock told us that when he was a pupil and student, there was only one dropout, probably someone, who later became an alcoholic. However, Buncamper pointed out that in the 1960s, people already tried to deal with the phenomenon of potential dropouts by establishing the *Huishoudschool*.[460] This meant that when a student could not keep up with the school they attended, they were referred to the *Huishoudschool*. There, they got another chance on another level.

When asked about the main reason why there were few dropouts during his childhood, Haddock indicated that society operated in different ways. 'It was a society whereby you strived to become something; you strived to get a position. No matter what, you tried to do something. If you weren't successful on St. Maarten, you'd go to Curaçao. If you did not succeed there, you'd go to Holland. You'd always go somewhere. I think that one from my class went to Canada.' This idea was also elaborated on by Felix Bell, an ex-student of the Oranje School. In those days, 'somebody who had finished primary school could already go and get a job with the government. In the last decade, the rules of the game changed. 'Nowadays children need a lot of other stuff, such as computers etc. Even to count boxes, they need computers now. So many things they have to know before they can get a job.' Artsen also suggested that longer school hours (namely until 15.00 hrs.) used to help keep children and youngsters busy and occupied with education for a good deal of the day.

Snijders further contextualized the issue of dropouts, who, in his view, were also exceptional cases. He gave the example of 'the boy S', who became a tennis champion. He was expelled from a Catholic school and tried to get through the Oranjeschool, but nothing worked. Still, Snijders underlined, 'he became very successful. I think he married a rich Jewish girl in the Sates and now is a businessman.'

460 School for home economics.

The foregoing suggests that the phenomenon of dropouts are, in fact, a social construct whose content is essentially linked to societal variables and not only to school attendance. Besides, in a community that saw itself as being comfortable, the lack of a diploma was not always a hindrance to achieving a decent life. Haddock utilized the state of adult clubs as a parameter to measure the general wellbeing of post-1954 St. Maarten: 'In the 1960s, between the 1960s and 1970s, clubs were flourishing then. They are always an indication of how things are going on the island. When things go well, adult clubs flourish.'

In the 1970s and 1980s

Connor noticed that upon her return from South America, the class make-up had changed. Before leaving, her classes had between 28-48 pupils, but after 1974, she only had 28 students. She suggested that this decrease was not due to demographics but to the growing numbers of dropouts.

Larmonie, a former inspector, also spoke of the existence of dropouts in the 1970s. He connected this to children, who were being educated in 'illegal'[461] Haitian and Spanish schools outside of the system. Even though he had orders to make sure that those schools were closed down, he revealed to me that he never undertook steps to that end. On the contrary, he even visited those schools unofficially.

Referring to the early 1980s, Harrigan mentioned a teachers' congress held at the John Larmonie Center. The then Minister of Education, Jacques Ferrier, gave a speech where he spoke of the poor state of education in the Dutch Antilles. There was a high percentage of failure in grade one. 'At the time, over 25% of the students were staying back, there was a high number of dropouts in secondary schools. He even mentioned that out of the number of students, who came into secondary schools (at a given point, they said that from all the students), only 5% of them made it to the top and completed their secondary education successfully).' Shortly after the above-mentioned congress, the report 'Education for one and all' came out. That would be followed by other later initiatives: 'Stappen naar een betere toekomst' in 1995 and the 'Delta Plan'.

461 We referred previously about those 'undocumented' schools.

According to Harrigan, 'in Curaçao you will see the failures of the system and the dropouts more easily, even in those Curaçao people, who go to Holland and cause problems there'. Thus, 'most likely they were dropouts. But the opportunities should be explored. Some may have joined the workforce or studied. Other may have moved to the USA, Canada, and got jobs there. Others remained and became self-employed. But I don't know. This is a weakness of the system that we cannot trace and know what has happened to past students. While I was working in school, I started to wonder what had happened to the people I had been to school with. Some joined the workforce. Others had their own business, like construction.' However, he underlined the lack of studies and data about dropouts.

The situation in the 1990s

The *Statistical Yearbook of the Netherlands Antilles* indicated that in 1998 adults made up the largest group in St. Maarten.[462]

Age range	**0 to 4**		**5 to 14**		**15 to 19**		**20 to 100**		**Total M/F**		**Grand total**
Number	1,842	1,886	2,217	2,337	982	954	10,860	11,143	15,901	16,320	32,221
Percentage	5.71%	5.85%	6.88%	7.25%	3.04%	2.96%	33.70%	34.58%	49.35%	50.65%	100%
Total	3,728		4,554		1,936		22,003				
Percentage	11.56%		14.13%		6%		68.28%				

Primary and secondary school pupils and students constituted approximately 20% of the population of St. Maarten and between 13-14% of the whole population of the Netherlands Antilles.

Academic year	**1995-1996**	**1996-1997**	**1997-1998**
Pupils and students	6,730	7,037	6,928
Percentage in relation to the whole Dutch Antilles	13% (total: 50,739)	14% (total: 51,808)	13% (total: 51,448)

462 The statistical information has been culled and adapted from: Quamina-Aiyejina, L. (1999). *Literacy and non-formal education in the Caribbean: The Netherlands Antilles*. [Education for All in the Caribbean: Assessment 2000. Case studies.. Kingston: UNESCO.

The 1992 census recorded the presence of 22,631 adults on the Dutch half of the Island; 1,938 of these were registered as illiterate (about 6% of the Island's total). However, since it was not indicated whether these people were absolute or functional illiterate, it cannot be ascertained whether they had dropped out of local formal education or whether they had come to the Island as adults from elsewhere (in this case, their illiteracy would have had predated their arrival in St. Maarten). What the above figures do show is that the issue of dropouts —however important it may be— affects a reduced segment of the population. Other issues, such as illegal residents and the so-called 'undocumented' pupils, are perhaps in more urgent need of research, analysis and resolution.

Given the lack of hard data, I must rely on the witness of educators and parents. According to them, the number of dropouts has increased over the last decades. Haddock pointed to Louis (the hurricane) in 1995 as the turning point for the Island, including for St. Maarten education. In the aftermath of the hurricane, people started to play down social values, which had been held in high esteem before that time, such as school attendance and cleanliness. The Island's focus shifted. 'From then onwards, I have noticed a decline in many things. The Island became very expensive after that. Having enough money to buy what you want became the main focus.' Consequently, the relationship between parents, their children and schools changed. Henceforward, it has been easier "to push 5 US$ in a child's hands and tell him to go to the shops to buy something than to spend quality time with your child".'

Even though the Island recovered on many fronts and has managed to develop, it did not in all areas. Haddock was of the opinion that 'TV and other factors' had to do with the negative changes. 'Now we have a lot of problems,' —he told us— 'even with small kids. We have gangs and gang fights. In the past there were gangs, who would fight at times, like in French Quarters. But it was different. If you behaved normally, you had no problem with them. Now kids are bored stiff. [In the past,] You would make toys or go for fruits. I can't remember myself not knowing what to do. We had no videos, so we had to rely on our creativity. And if you had troubles with your teacher, you had troubles with your parents at home. Creativity played a role.'[463]

463 The latter comment implies that the imagination of children has been impoverished by TV, presumably

Hodge gave some other reasons why students usually stopped attending school: 'We still have too many dropouts, too many people who can't cope with the pressure of education. We have young women that become pregnant. We have young men who become drug involved. We have the macho type of young man who will not continue with education ("If I finish my MAVO…"). Education should provide opportunities so that they can develop further elsewhere.'

Scott told us during our interview that dropouts constitute a problem for the inspector of secondary education, who deals with referrals from one school to another. Moreover, a lot of the existing problems have to do with the lack of structural help being different available schools.

Global consideration

To sum up, we see that the dropout rate has been increasing over the years. Initially, there were some alternatives, such as shifting to another school, but somehow, the dropouts were able to find a fitting place in society, get a job or immigrated to another country in order to start a new life. In those days, there were not many stories about dropouts, who were unable to somehow make it in life. The situation changed in the 1970s and worsened in the 1990s. The arrival of TV and the biggest hurricanes allegedly changed the ethos of the St. Maarten community and negatively affected education with respect to dropouts.

CLASSROOM COMPOSITION AND ITS IMPACT

The composition of a class has a certain impact on the educational outcome. According to Lazear,[464] students in smaller classes learn more. One of the positive effects of attending a smaller class is that the levels of student achievement and educational attainment rise.[465] This often happens because there is less disruption during class activities, and students get

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because TV takes over the place of the individual by giving the masses prefab situations to think about.

464 Lazear, E. (2001). Educational Production. In *Quarterly Journal of Economics,* (116:3), pp. 777-803.

465 Krueger, A., and Whitmore, D. (2001). Would Smaller Classes Help Close the Black-White Achievement Gap?, in Chubb, J. & Loveless, T. (eds.) (2002). *Bridging the Achievement Gap*: Washington: Brookings Institution Press.

more chances to participate and the teacher to coach them individually.[466] When the number of students increases, the dynamics in the classroom change, for example, the bigger the class is, the greater the level of disruption will be. Apparently, a student's propensity to disrupt, too, correlates at times with measurable student-level characteristics, such as socioeconomic status.[467]

We will now look into the number of students and the size of the classes and classrooms in St. Maarten between 1954 and 2000. The well-known STAR project uses three class types: small (13-17 student), regular (22-25 student) and regular classes with a teacher aide.

Class size

Our interviewees agreed that the size of the classes decreased in recent years. Voges indicated that classes have become smaller overtime from an initial 40 pupils to the current 25. However, he also stated that although classrooms should ideally be 10X10 m (100m2), they used to be 7X9 m, which was not sufficient to house all the students comfortably. Besides, Voges opined that although a lot of changes have been made in function of FBE (Foundation-Based Education), the situation is still not completely satisfactory.

In this picture: 5th grade class of 1966 St. Joseph: The teachers: Buncamper, Schaminee, Connor

During the whole time span dealt with in this research project, the classes were above the regular size (STAR). Bell recalls 8 classes with about 30-32 pupils per classroom. Millicent, on the other hand, did not find the class size "really big" in her school days. She recalls 18 pupils per classroom, because St. Maarten was not very populated. There were also parallel classes (1A, 1B, etc.), which helped to better distribute the children.

466 McKee, G, Rivkin, S. &Sims, K. (2010). Disruption, Achievement and the Heterogeneous Benefits of Smaller Classes. In *NBER Working Paper No. 15812*.

467 Segal, C. (2008). Classroom Behavior. In *Journal of Human Resources* (43:4), pp. 783-814.

SCHOOL AND CLASS COMPOSITION

In this subsection, we shall look at gender and performance, gender and school performance, socio-economic background and school composition as well as pupils and students with special needs.

Gender and class make-up

As to class configuration, some of our interviewees found that male students have been losing out in school. Schools seem to have become "feminized" to the detriment of the boys.

Co-education has been the norm in St. Maarten. Lourens recalled that the classes were mixed. Furthermore, the girls have usually outnumbered the boys, which is also different from other parts of the world. According to her, there were normally two thirds girls and one third boys. This was reinforced by Lake, who told us that at the Seventh-Day Adventist school, there were "initially 100-125 students; more boys than girls (always this way)". While Harrigan could not provide exact figures, he also declared that "in most of the classes that I had at the time, the girls outnumbered the boys. One of the things that I have noticed with the data that we have come across is that if you look at Special Ed., these students are mostly boys. When you also look at some of the trends in the last years in schools, the boys were also outnumbering the girls. While in your higher classes, like in your VWO, you see that sometimes there are more girls than boys". The former teachers, pupils and students, and management personnel, who filled in our questionnaire also reinforced the idea that there were more girls than boys.

Mixed classroom at St. Joseph's in 1965

The interviews clearly suggest that girls were never barred from schooling in St. Maarten. Additionally, they implied that the higher the grade was, the larger the group of female students. Somewhere between secondary and primary school, the male students dropped out due to the different reasons, which we discussed earlier.

In future research one could look into the question whether the feminization of classrooms may have had a negative impact on the school achievement of male pupils.[468] In addition, they could investigate whether higher scoring peers impacted male students' performance in St. Maarten and how.[469]

Gender and school performance

We asked some of our interviewees whether they thought that gender played a role or, said otherwise, whether female students were in general better students. Across the world, girls' grades are usually higher and they are in the main also better behaved than their male counterparts.[470] Harrigan's reaction to the above question was it "should lead to a very interesting study. I think that it is probably, a visible trend that the boys are not performing as well as the girls. Some studies in the States have indicated that both the boy and the girls perform better when they go to all boys' and all girls' schools like the school I went to. When they are together, for one reason or the other, the boys do not perform as well as the girls. (…) gang-related violence (…), unfortunately they did not mention whether it was a situation where only boys were involved".

Socio-economic background and school composition

Larmonie hinted at a correlation between social background and school composition. The social background of a school's student population very much depended on the students' district and their school's denomination. For him, the situation was as follows: "Catholic schools: middle class (mostly). Public schools: lower income class (mostly). Protestant schools: lower income, especially Cole Bay and Middle Region, and in the Christian Hillside: a

468 Cortes, K., Moussa, W. & Weinstein, J. (2012). *Making the grade: the impact of classroom behavior on academic achievement.* (Accessed on 13 May, 2012)

https://appam.confex.com/…/CortesMoussaWeinstein_Behavior.pdf

469 Dahl, G. &Moretti, E. (2008). The Demand for Sons, in *Review of Economic Studies* (75:4), pp. 1085-1120.

470 As a result, sometimes, having more female students in a classroom enhances educational quality. A girl-dominated classroom may positively impact on achievement for both boys and girls. See: Whitmore, D. (2006). *Classroom Gender Composition and Student Achievement: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment.* Schanzenbach: University of Chicago, p. 2.

lot of Surinamese Christians." Snijders reinforced this view: "If you were 'Somebody' (with a capital 's'), you sent your children to a Catholic school." However, different respondents indicated that socio-economic variables were not the only ones to determine, which school children went. Parents often alluded to the discipline, the output (more students passing) and the religious perspective which the education represented. In fact, Snijders also mentioned that "if they [pupils or students] misbehaved there [in Catholic school], which they very much did, they landed in a government school. We had big bad cases that had been expelled from Catholic schools and had come to the Oranjeschool, because we were the biggest. Even though sometimes the children were rightly expelled, it seems to me that in most cases they were too fast in sending children away. People should have tried harder before 'slicing them out'. We had those children in the class. They gave us a lot of problems, which, when combined with recently graduated teachers from Holland, made the problem even bigger". Newly trained teachers from abroad could not really deal with the situation. Nevertheless, for Larmonie "the training was pretty good, and you still learned while doing."

Students with special needs

All of the respondents to our questionnaire agreed that there were children with special needs. Most of those children were hyperactive; some were slightly handicapped; and a minority was physically impaired. A slightly larger group had other non-specified needs.

Global considerations

After listening to our interviewees and having re-read the questionnaires, we observe that girls were well integrated into the education system of St. Maarten. Probably, the fact that nuns —i.e. women— were the primary teachers may have consolidated the general view that education and women were not exclusive.

At least one of our informants spoke of the link between the place of residence and school denomination as variables, which influenced the population of the different schools. Future research could look into this aspect of St. Maarten's education in more detail.

During our research, it also became apparent that former teachers, pupils, students, and management staff were aware of 'special needs' among their pupils and students.

Moreover, most of those children seemed to have been boys. We also know that a school was established to help these children.

TEACHER TRAINING

Education implies not only schools with sufficient accommodation and suitable equipment, but also teachers, who are trained in the techniques needed to successfully accomplish their work.[471] Securing good education for future generations calls for good teachers.

Finding teachers for St. Maarten's schools always implied searching for them abroad. There were not many candidates to choose from in the Dutch Antilles, so initially, they were recruited from The Netherlands and Suriname. The source of teachers was a consequence of the fact that schools needed teachers, who were proficient in the Dutch language.

Teacher recruitment was initially shaped by the school regulation of 1907, which categorized teachers into 4 degrees (from 1 to 4). This legal framework affected the religious congregations involved in education in the Dutch Antilles.[472] In response, the Sisters of Roosendaal and the Brothers of Tilburg provided the training for the lower degrees for pupil-teacher and assistant teachers. Boys and girls from the age of 16 year were admitted to all schools as student teachers under supervision in order to learn the theory and practice of the school subjects. Once the student teacher had completed the course, he or she could sit the exam before the Inspector of Education. The graduation certificate included ten subjects, one was pedagogy. The level of examination was more or less equal to that of MULO-exams.

To become a 3rd level teacher one had to have a Curaçao teaching degree or a degree from The Netherlands, Suriname, or The Netherlands Indies (present-day Indonesia). The level of examination on Curaçao was the same as in The Netherlands.

A 2nd level teacher was at the same time a 3rd level teacher with two complementary degrees. With another degree, one could get promoted to 1st degree teacher.

471 Fergus, H. (2003), p. 63.

472 George, M. (2010). *Catholic Education in the Dutch Caribbean*, pp. 28-30.

The exam for head-teacher was only possible in 1944. With the headmaster's certificate, one could teach in the 1st grade (from category A to category B) with two other supplementary degrees, five supplementary degrees or an MO certificate beside the headmaster's certificate.

It was not until 1918 that girls from Curaçao and other islands were allowed to stay as boarders at the St. Martinusgesticht in order to study for a teaching degree. Sometimes, due to the state of public transport, they had to stay the whole week and were only able to go home on weekends. During World War I (1914-1918), it was not possible to send more Sisters from The Netherlands to the missions; so the local schools were forced to recruit their personnel from parishes or the neighborhood.[473]

Most of the Sisters sent to the mission were assistant teachers or student teachers. Due to the school law of 1908, the Sisters who had been in education for a long time qualified as 4th degree teachers. This applied to local teachers who had obtained their teaching degrees in Curaçao or The Netherlands.[474]

An interesting turn of events took place in 1959 when the Curaçao government thought that the teacher training course ought to be brought to completion in The Netherlands. Their argument was that this task fell to the main country within the Kingdom and not to the islands. The first part of the training would thus be done in Curaçao and the rest in The Netherlands. It the end, the decision was made to stage the whole training in Curaçao. Bell, one of our interviewees, recalled that during his childhood "teachers were trained in Curaçao and the Netherlands."

In 1972, the IPSO ("Instituut voor Pedagogische en Sociale Opleidingen") was founded. In 1985, the PABO ("Pedagogische Akademie Basis Onderwijs") set up a four-year teacher training program. Both initiatives were staged in Curaçao.[475] This innovation entailed that local teachers could get a teaching degree in the region and then return to their own island to teach. Elshot did her teacher training at the IPSO in Curaçao. According to her, the training was in Dutch, but they also had Papiamento as a subject. She added that

473 Cf. Hart, J. (1992) *150 jaar Rooms Katholiek Onderwijs op de Nederlandse Antillen, pp.* 48-53.

474 According to Sr. Marie Lawrence

475 Cf. Hart, J. (1992), 77-78.

"The Dutch was very good, the level. The *opleiding* was not very Dutch; it was very much based on the situation on Curaçao."

As the shortage of teachers grew, so too did the need get more local teachers. Henri Brookson, another one of our interviewees, was then encouraged by Sr. Borgia to follow the teacher's training course because, she found, St. Maarten would need its *own* teachers in the future.[476] Brookson[477] told us that he found that the Sisters supported him, because he was a local. They gave him the chance to go for further education in the Netherlands. Since he had the French nationality (from French Saint Martin), it was not easy for him to get a Dutch scholarship.[478] Hodge, too, did his teacher training sponsored by the Sisters in Maastricht. He returned to St. Maarten after his studies to become a teacher, director, inspector, and policy maker in matters of education.

Though there was a need for teacher training, Snijders stated other issues, according to him, needed to be dealt with. "In those days, we had other problems apart from the staff problem. The staff problem was twofold: they would come for only 3 years and oftentimes they had just finished their training —which meant that they had to doubly adjust: first, culturally to St. Maarten and, second, as teachers in front of a class." The contract was given to teachers for 3 years and could be renewed if necessary. The new teachers were usually thrown into new situations. This problem was more urgent in the eyes of Snijders than establishing a teacher training program or center. Besides, Snijders found that the types of schools made the situation a little more complex. "The second problem was that we had two types of school: government and Catholic schools."

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476 Voges, M. (1990). *De Zusters Dominicanessen van Voorschoten, p.* 34.

477 Written interview / questionair with Brookson.

478 "Wel vind ik dat ze mij, als local wel gestimuleerd hebben en mij de kans hebben gegeven om mij te ontwikkelen door mijn ouders bij te staan om een school voor mij te vinden in Nederland. Ik had toen de Franse nationaliteit, dus geen studiebeurs en zij hebben toen met de nonnen van Steenwijkerwold, waar ik op de Kweekschool zat, een financiele regeling kunnen treffen zodat mijn ouders mijn studie konden betalen. In deze was vooral zuster Borgia, de catalysator. Deze non had een speciale liefde voor St.Maarten en de St.Maartenaren. Door haar toedoen hebben vele jongeren kunnen studeren. Als iemand niet naar school kwam dan zat zij er bovenop. Ze had goede kontakten met de ouders en zette zich voor 200% in voor het eiland".

In 1985-1986, the Minister of Education[479] in collaboration with Henry Blinker and Wyclif Smith initiated a teacher's training in St. Maarten. This was an attempt to meet the demand on the Island. Robertina also took part in this process of the teacher's training. She confirms that "we had the island government do a one year kindergarten and teacher training program and there was a need for this initiative." The situation called for local measures: "There were a lot of people, who could not go off-island and already had a kindergarten degree. They wanted to continue, but they could not go for training elsewhere." Or as Harrigan explained, "It was a local course. It provided the opportunity to change careers. For instance, for persons who had jobs, like nurses or lab assistants, and wanted to get into education. There were also other persons who prior to that had been trained as kindergarten teachers and now wanted to be trained to be allowed to tech in the *basisschool*."

Another reason was that there were a lot of immigrants arriving on the island with their children. Some of those migrants were teachers, who wanted to benefit from the growth of the Island. We were told that St. Maarten was developing economically and teachers from Suriname and other islands migrated to the Island for that reason. When in 1986 the then Minister of Education, Badejo-Richardson, signed a protocol that each Island Territory could determine the language of instruction in elementary education, Saba opted for 100% English. St. Maarten saw the establishment and growth of the MAC, which also chose English. A new language of instruction meant that a different kind of teacher was needed. Dutch and Surinamese teachers had driven Dutch-speaking schools but were less suitable to implement the English-medium curriculum.

Eventually, the local teacher training program was discontinued because, according to Robertina, "It was a one-time thing. It was a one-year training, similar to what the university did this year with the teacher assistant training. It was for people who had been working in the profession, who had had some sort of training, but never received an official diploma."

This teacher training resulted in a good number of local teachers, to name a few: Roberts (who is now vice-principal), Boirard (who is now Task manager of Foundation-Based

479 Education for All (in Papiamento)

Education), and Lake (who is another school principal). The latter mentioned that she came all the way from Statia to follow this training and that "a lot of those initial 10 trainees are principals now."

Another important development on St. Maarten has been the rather recent foundation of the University of St. Martin, which is located on the Dutch side of the Island. One of programs offered was a Bachelor of Arts in Education.[480] The first two years were at the USM, after which the students completed the remaining years at the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI). A former staff member of the university explained that "the agreement was that the SXM students would do their first two years in SXM (Associate in General Liberal Arts) and after that they would move to the UVI on St Thomas, and do their two remaining years over there. In the beginning, they would do their student teaching on St. Thomas, but later on, towards 1997-1998, or even before 1996, they would come back to SXM and do their student teaching in SXM." As a result, "the differences in training for elementary school teachers between the American and the Dutch systems became clear. In the American system, they would have teachers for Physical Ed, Music, Handicraft and Writing, too. So a lot of the teachers on St. Maarten were complaining that the new teachers were not properly prepared to function in the then still heavily Dutch system."

Robertina told us the difference in approach and complaints about the preparation of the teachers was the reason why a full program was set up and taught at the USM in St. Maarten in 1998-1999. The first students graduated in 2001-2002. The then Minister of Education, Stanley Lampe, recognized the BA in elementary education as it was offered at the USM. That program is still being offered today. Today, the difference is that funding comes from USONA,481 which requires that a new teacher training program be designed in terms of the ideas behind Foundation-Based Education. In the old program at UVI, the students would do their first two years in general liberal arts, then, one year of didactic and pedagogical subjects, and finish with student teaching. It is meant that students go to schools from the first year onwards and combine theory and practice right from start. In 2006, they had 53 students.

480 Cf. http://www.usmonline.net/degree_progs.html (Accessed on March 10, 2004).

481 Funding agency for the Kingdom partners.

Voges acknowledged the training program but remarked that "the government created the local teacher training course at USM to solve the language program. They are English-trained". Implicitly, he was referring to the fact that there are also schools in St. Maarten where the language of instruction is still Dutch.

By 2000, most teachers had still been trained in the USA, The Netherlands, somewhere in the region, or Suriname. Harrigan told us that once the USM started running its teacher training program, the government decided that scholarships for becoming a primary school teacher would be given only to those who study locally.

In the next section, we will look at from where the teachers mostly came and the imprint, which they left behind.

TEACHERS FROM THE WORLD AND THEIR STYLES

In the history of education in St. Maarten there have been a lot of teachers hailing from Antigua, Barbados, Jamaica, Suriname, St. Kitts, Curaçao, the Netherlands, etc. Their talents, dedication, good intentions and input were used to educate St. Maarten's children and youth. Though all teachers are classroom managers, there are still differences in their approach. This could be because of their training, background or gender. We will map out from where those teachers came and try to determine the 'footprint' that they left on the Island.

The search for teachers

Some schools started small, while others had a good number of staff from the beginning. Sometimes challenges were there from the start, as Asha explained when she wanted to start the Christian Hillside School. "We had to find teachers because nobody wanted to teach in a school that wasn't there and nobody had heard of before. So, given that my youngest child was 4, I decided that it was time for me to come back. So I would get them ready to go to school in the morning and then I would start to teach." In 1975, she found some teachers, who would be able to help her run to run the school professionally. They started teaching in the community center, now Larmonie. They had one classroom. At that time, they also found a house on the corner, just before the gas station on Marigold Hill

Road and set up two classrooms there. As stated, they had two classes: one class was a combination of Grades two and three, because the children were different ages. Their teachers came from St Lucia, Barbados and Suriname (Asha herself). A few years later, in 1987, she had teachers from Suriname and the other islands (e.g. Proth was from Antigua and Laurence Groeneveldt from Aruba); however, the majority were from Suriname. There was an exodus of people from the country after the Surinamese independence in 1975.

In Elshot's case, it was different. She found that school was "predominantly dominated by the nuns. We had the convent close to us. It was very secretive. As a child we'd wonder what was there behind those high walls." Nonetheless, although the Sisters were from the Netherlands, they basically had local teachers. She told us: "Jane Buncamper was my teacher, and she played an important role in my life later. I have to thank her for my beautiful handwriting. We also had home-grown teachers from Simpson Bay — teacher Holly and Leen Houtman." She underlined that there was several local teachers, but she could not recall their names.

The management

Despite there being both local and foreign teachers, the management level did not always reflect the variety of origins present in schools. In the case of Catholic school, Elshot recalls that "you had a clear picture that the nuns were in charge. The teachers were great teachers, but you'd sense that the nuns were in charge of the whole system."

The Sister's authority must not be understood as religious in nature or in content. Our interviewees never complained about the religious dimension of education. One must bear in mind St. Maarten's people were religious and founded schools that underlined their religious perception of reality. In Elshot's words, "I definitely did not feel that there was an ''imposition' of the religious thing. It came naturally. Praying the Our Father and Hail Mary went automatically so."

The limitations of a mixed teaching staff

Looking back, Elshot felt that the shortcomings were not part of a (colonial) plan. Teachers in general "did not know better. It is with hindsight that we can say that." Pupils and students were not prepared well enough to understand the complexities and background of

their own region. “We did not know anything about Statia and Saba. It was only when we visited Statia and saw the Jewish ruins that we learnt about the presence of Jews on the Island. In Curaçao that is more visible.” However, Elshot thinks that it could have been different. “We could have gone further if we had had local teachers. When you have foreign teachers, they don’t know. They’d have to get acclimatized and that takes time. They would not know the local landmarks if they saw a picture of them.”

Buncamper roughly agreed with Elshot’s recollection. She had worked with the sisters and, in her view, “the nuns were the teachers. They came with their own culture. They had some white local teachers, too, but they were from another social class.” The Sisters could only transfer knowledge because they were unable to “look into the minds of the local persons. They could not say this is what local persons are going to need at the end of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st Century. They could never say that because that is what they knew. I think that it would be unfair to judge them, because they did not know.” However, even though Buncamper sought to remain fair historically speaking, she added that “If you had to look back now, I would say ‘yes’, because they should have done it. They should have had that knowledge.”

Talking about the relationship between the management and teachers, Buncamper found that “between the nuns and the Dutch teachers the atmosphere was okay, but the relationship between the nuns and the local young teachers was another cup of tea. It was bad. And as soon as you got married, they (nuns) stopped your pension.”

Haddock, a local, recalled that during his student years, the teachers were mostly Dutch “Oh, yes. I remember some Dutch teachers who had really influenced me. It was a classical approach, but not always necessarily bad. If you can connect, you will succeed.” He was referring to the Sisters. He remembers that “they basically took care of your religious education and that you had food, etc. A lot of us grew up getting fed by the nuns. Education was the classical approach. We learnt a lot about Holland. I don’t remember learning about the Caribbean. When I started teaching, I learnt a lot from other Caribbean teachers.”

Teacher recruitment and exodus

Of all 88 former teachers, who filled out our questionnaire, 30 were locals, 29 from the rest of the Netherlands Antilles, 13 from The Netherlands, 10 from Suriname, and 6 from

elsewhere. Our interviews confirmed that the teaching staff had always been very diverse in terms of origin.

MAC superintendent Spring provided us with an overview of the origin of the teaching staff between 1976 -1994.

SCHOOL YEAR	ANTILLEAN*	DUTCH	OTHERS
1976 - 77	58	o	42
1985 - 86	43	7	50
1989 - 90	63	3	34
1993 - 94	45	4	51

Percentage of Teaching Staff by Nationality
*** Antilleans include Surinamese and Nationalized Antilleans.**

From the well-documented list, we shall name a few to give an idea of the mixture of different nationalities in school. This is when the teachers started to work at the MAC.

1976:
Camille Baly (St. Maarten)
Bary-Lewis Magadalene (Dominica)
Lucia Hodge (Anguilla)
Anna Moeslikan (Suriname)
Patricia Scott (St. Maarten)
Sheila Kelly-Helmen (Aruba)

1977
Judit Hull (St. Vincent)
Gerda Kraai (Suriname)

1978
Glenville Brown (Aruba)
Josianne Fleming-Artsen (Aruba)
Quincy Harrigan (Anguilla)
Monica Stimpson (Jamaica)
Elizabeth Van-der-voort (Jamaica)

1979
Shirley Connor (Nevis)
Bernadine Felipe-Curlingford (Aruba)
Irene Fyfield (St. Kitts)
Celia Steward (England)
Joseph Wiltshire (Nevis)

1980
Edith Jones (Jamaica)
Claudette Roacn (Jamaica)

1981/1982
Eelke Van Wijk (The Netherlands)
Willemtje Van Wijk (The Netherlands)
Myrna Bell (St. Maarten)

1983/1984
Clinton Spring (St. Vincent)
Lalitadevi Gray (Suriname)
Juliana Hodge (Aruba)

1985
Dindial Bhogan (Guyana)
Dularie Bhogan (Guyana)
Mavis (Chiverton (St. Kitts)
Annetta Greenaway (Antigua)
Lydia Richardson-Tandu (St. Martin F.W.I.)

Streefkerk mentioned that most of her collegues were from The Netherlands, St. Maarten and Curaçao. However, according to Bell, even in the early days, "most teachers were local, so the explanations were in English." Connor, who has been a teacher for 32 years, recalls that when she was a pupil "almost all teachers were nuns, beside Hilda Connor and Marie Greaux. They were the only lay teachers at St. Joseph's when I was a child. Greaux was a teacher of French from St. Barths in the late sixties early seventies. Also my father was a teacher for 47 years. All my 4 siblings were teachers too."

Staff of 1952
From left to right: C. Lake(Kindergarten), Sr. Agathe, A Houtman, H. Conner, J. Conner, M. Gréaux, C. Conner, Sr. Modesta, E. Peterson, and center Sr. Magda-Principal

Nevertheless, despite the presence of local teachers, the majority came from elsewhere. The flipside of the recruitment of foreign teachers is that there was little continuity. The teachers arrived on the Island, but also left. This dynamic process was called by Snijders "a constant exodus of teachers."

When asked why so many teachers departed from the Island on a regular basis, he speculated that the situation was caused, first, by the existence of three-year contracts and, second, by the lack of stability and innovation. On the one hand, "the first year, the [foreign] teachers had to get used to the Island. In the second year, they were better accustomed to work here. And in the third, they were about to leave again." On the other hand, "it was all about training and re-training, due to which innovations could not quite be introduced, because you were always doing and redoing the basics."

The process was affected negatively by teachers, who had come to St. Maarten and were not really motivated by the idea of educating children. They came "because of the beach and nature." Snijders stressed that not all foreign teachers were like that, but a group was. He added, "I had to talk to some because as soon as school was over, they would leave for the beach (which is across from the Oranjeschool). I found that I had to tell them that that was not a good thing. The biggest asset for a teacher is to have love for the children. If you have that, you are bound to be successful." Those teachers were often European Dutch.

As to the Dutch teachers, Snijders remembered that several of them had been in St. Maarten for a long time, for instance, Strijdkerk (the former principal of the Martin Luther King Jr. School on the hill, the Hill school). He added, somewhat anecdotally, "When you go to Zorg en Rust, there was a bar. He was the principal there and I was the principal at Oranje School. Now the school has been transformed. There was even an *openlucht* classroom. It used to be the coolest school on the island. The children from his school had to do exams and they came to our school. He used to teach math and I did Dutch. We shared our tasks. He was a very good teacher." Another example was Camille Baily,[482] whom he replaced when he suddenly became principal in Cole Bay.

Snijders mentioned a few more names of Dutch teachers and especially why he remembered them. "There was also another teacher, Sluis, who left for Holland and then we got a teacher who always wore a tie and whom I had to rescue once. He had a pupil who was epileptic. Once I heard a lot of screaming, I went out and I saw him suffocating –his face was almost purple. The pupil was hanging on his tie, probably in a fit of rage or epilepsy because he had foam in his mouth. We had to save him. He was a kind guy, but he got involved in some sexual scandals —he went out with youngsters."

Another vivid story is that "there was a teacher in my school, Laan, his father was a *burgermeester* in Holland. He wanted to be principal and he went around asking the teachers whether they would want to work for him. So I thought, 'Hey, if he is principal, I'll have to work under Laan'. So I went and wrote an application letter for the position and so did he. In the end, I was appointed and he did not like it very much; for a while, he was my enemy in the school. Later on he left and now he is working in education in Curaçao."

His last anecdote was the following. "We had a teacher, a Dutch guy, called Vissenberg. He was very artistic and worked on a choir on the French side and even on the anthem. He had a drinking problem. He used to bring his thermos with a bit of booze in it. He was dismissed from the Catholic school. He was a good teacher, but alcoholism was a real problem. Once we were working in the voting bureau, and he started getting pale. I did not know what was happening. Suddenly he fell ill and was taken to hospital. The doctor asked me how come a teacher was in that state. Another day, the inspector, Stanley Hodge,

482 A St. Maartener.

came into the school and asked him whether he smelt like alcohol. He denied it and said it was aftershave. Sometime later, Mr. White, an English man, turned up at school and he said that he had been chosen by the Board to replace Mr. Vissenberg (mostly because Vissenberg was often absent). He looked a bit like Vissenberg, so I said: 'Let me call the School Deputy to see if it is true'. Then he approached me and said: 'I am Vissenberg'. I called colleagues and introduced him to them and nobody noticed that White was Vissenberg. He even taught a half day without his own pupils recognizing him. He was a great actor. He stayed on in school, though he did not always turn up to teach. Finally, he died of liver cirrhosis." Snijders' final analysis was that Dutch teachers could be good, but they often had another agenda than to just teach and educate St. Maarten's future generations.

As for the Surinamese teachers, Snijders spoke of the financial and language aspects. They "came in droves because their salary was better here. However, many of them used St. Maarten as a stepping-stone to go on to Holland. In fact, if all the Surinamese teachers left, education in St. Maarten would have been paralyzed." The Surinamese had one great advantage: the language. The Dutch had been able to establish a colony (namely Suriname) where Dutch really was the official language. As Snijders commented, "their Dutch is on a high level. I must complement them on their Dutch in comparison to the Antilleans." However, there was also another side to their language skills. Their English was not good enough to teach in English.

Larmonie could not recall "ever having Antillean teachers in his whole life. They were all Dutch and Surinamese." His reaction towards their input was that "a lot of teachers invested their own money in their teaching. This was good, but it also meant that there was no uniform system in place. Besides, foreign teachers used their own material, depending on where they came from." The difference between having the freedom to take one's own initiative and lack of uniformity in the system was problematic.

As for his own preference with respect to Oranjeschool, Snijders confessed that he was not totally happy with the situation: "I'd rather get my teachers from the English-speaking Caribbean, especially Barbados, Trinidad and Jamaica. So I tried hard to get teachers from Barbados. Maybe you met Mr Gittens and Ruby Labega? But we also had applicants from other islands, but I found that their level of education was very low. I was

disappointed in their performance, except those from Barbados. Also many teachers came from Aruba, because they are multilingual: Papiamento, Dutch, Spanish and English. Most went back to Aruba because their island has been doing very well."

The language of instruction was, for Harrigan, not only one of the reasons why so many teachers had to come from overseas, but also why some of the problems arose. "We have had situations that some Dutch teachers come and work in cycle one, which is in English, and then you have some bad practices. Their command of the English language is not at the level needed to teach those classes. So, the shortage of teachers caused problems and forced you to hire people from abroad. One of the problems with the teachers from Jamaica is "they won't say 'ice' but 'hice.' Another hindrance was that "they were not always tested to see if they knew the teaching material. Are they up to the job? Will all students end up talking like the teacher does?"

At times, the presence of so many foreign teachers also led to bad feelings between the schools. Since the MAC needed more English-speaking teachers than other schools, some insinuated that it was becoming an employment agency for foreign teachers and so forth. However, that was not new, according to Harrigan. "over the years, the trend had gotten to the point where most of our schools were staffed by teachers, who were from abroad rather than local teachers". Artsen, who taught the 5th grade in the MAC in 1980 and 6th grade in 1981, mentioned that "teachers from Jamaica and Dominica were running the school. Most teachers were Jamaicans, they were good teachers."

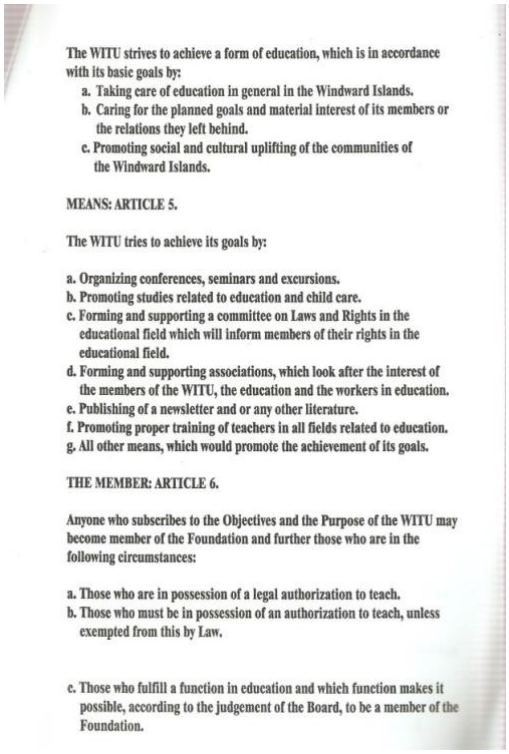
The relationship between the school staff in St. Maarten was generally good. In Harrigan's words: "Foreign-trained teachers knew that they had had a better training and felt that should help their colleagues, who had been trained on the Island. The local ones had become teachers, because of the social exposure that they had had, which distinguished them from the rest. (…) There was enthusiasm among the staff in terms of curriculum development. It was very taxing work, because you were teaching and also making sure that you would document the good things ... so that you'd avoid having repetition of those stages. (…) It was, I think, they were a setup of very dedicated teachers at that time. I don't know if the situation is still the same."

When Hodge was a director, he found the collaboration between the teachers of different nationalities working well. "I had 3 Dutch teachers and 3 Antillean teachers (him

being one of them). We had a good atmosphere. We would do things together and work together. Dutch teachers were Artie Van den Hoeven, Keulers, and one from Holland who had lived in Suriname for a long time. From the Antilles, Halley, Gumps and Rose Vlaun."

Connor also recalled that "the relations between teachers were good. There was no coffee room. You were always busy in the playground. However, in Simpson Bay, they had troubles between Dutch and Island teachers." Hodge was probably hinting at this episode when he made the following remark: "I cannot say that I ever noticed any kind of tension between the two groups, although some other colleagues said that there were some [in other schools]. Personally, I never saw any. There were no essential differences. I could not believe that in other schools Dutch and Antillean teachers would sit in different rooms. I couldn't even grasp that. That was an abnormal situation for me. I would not have allowed that. Togetherness gets things done!"

Hodge admitted, however, that what caused some tension among the teachers was the establishment of the 'Teachers Trade Union' around 1970-1972. The Union was "made up mostly of expatriates, mostly Dutch teachers (from Holland). The locals were not quite for the idea." Only later on was the Union run by local educators.



The WITU strives to achieve a form of education, which is in accordance with its basic goals by:

a. Taking care of education in general in the Windward Islands.
b. Caring for the planned goals and material interest of its members or the relations they left behind.
c. Promoting social and cultural uplifting of the communities of the Windward Islands.

MEANS: ARTICLE 5.

The WITU tries to achieve its goals by:

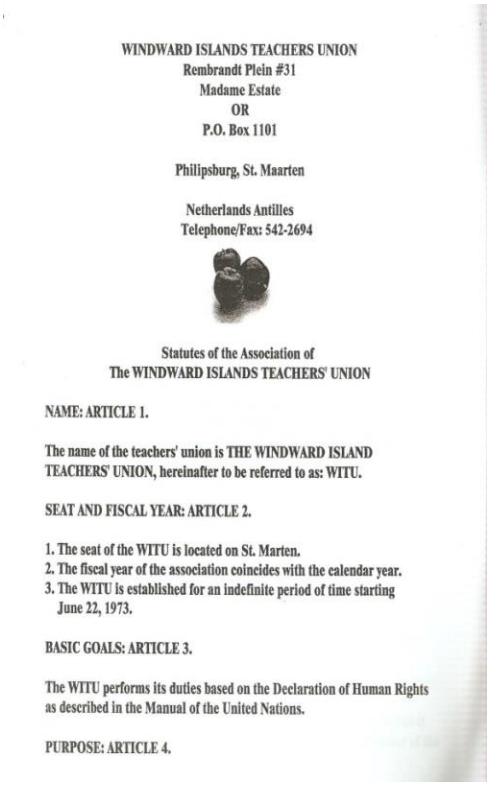
a. Organizing conferences, seminars and excursions.
b. Promoting studies related to education and child care.
c. Forming and supporting a committee on Laws and Rights in the educational field which will inform members of their rights in the educational field.
d. Forming and supporting associations, which look after the interest of the members of the WITU, the education and the workers in education.
e. Publishing of a newsletter and or any other literature.
f. Promoting proper training of teachers in all fields related to education.
g. All other means, which would promote the achievement of its goals.

THE MEMBER: ARTICLE 6.

Anyone who subscribes to the Objectives and the Purpose of the WITU may become member of the Foundation and further those who are in the following circumstances:

a. Those who are in possession of a legal authorization to teach.
b. Those who must be in possession of an authorization to teach, unless exempted from this by Law.

c. Those who fulfill a function in education and which function makes it possible, according to the judgement of the Board, to be a member of the Foundation.



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Statutes of the Association of
The WINDWARD ISLANDS TEACHERS' UNION

NAME: ARTICLE 1.

The name of the teachers' union is THE WINDWARD ISLAND TEACHERS' UNION, hereinafter to be referred to as: WITU.

SEAT AND FISCAL YEAR: ARTICLE 2.

1. The seat of the WITU is located on St. Marten.
2. The fiscal year of the association coincides with the calendar year.
3. The WITU is established for an indefinite period of time starting June 22, 1973.

BASIC GOALS: ARTICLE 3.

The WITU performs its duties based on the Declaration of Human Rights as described in the Manual of the United Nations.

PURPOSE: ARTICLE 4.

THE INSPECTORATE

Education is a must for every child; moreover, quality education should be guaranteed. According to the UNESCO country report:

"Education in the Netherlands Antilles is based on the principle that each child, regardless of religious faith, race or social status, has to be given the opportunity to develop him or herself completely. Primarily it is expected that the aim should be to strive to form the child to be an acceptable member of the society, in accordance with his or her individual capacities and natural abilities."483

As communities strive for quality education, the school inspection plays a wide and substantial role in that endeavor. In the past, schools could decide what to teach, how the content would be taught and what parents should be told about their children's performance and progress. It did not seem as open and transparent as it should be.

In time, schools became part of the decision-making process. They needed to open up and even compete with each other in order to gain students. Globalization has only increased the need to implement curricula, which are in sync with global needs and trends. Furthermore, schools have also had to internationalize their curriculum in terms of content. Issues such as (local, regional and global) identity, capacity building, citizenship and critical thinking have become practically mandatory throughout the world.484 Inspectors are the people meant to keep an observant eye on these developments per school and per class.

There are different systems used to inspect schools. According to Van Bruggen, "almost all inspectorates have some system of 'full inspection of schools,' also called 'whole inspection,' 'complete inspection,' or 'broad inspection'." They visit a school in order to obtain more information about what is being taught at a particular school and what the outcome is. In short, "they analyze all kind of papers – syllabus, school development plan, timetables, self-evaluation, etc. - before the visit; they talk with the head of the school and with other leading people; they talk with students and parents – sometimes also with

483 http://www.unesco.org/education/wef/countryreports/netherlands_antilles/rapport_1.html (Accessed 13 May 2012).

484 George, M. &Van Enckevort, M. (2010). Identifying education in a global world, pp. 59-65.

representatives of employers or other 'stakeholders' in the world of schooling; they observe lessons and other learning and teaching activities; they observe meetings of staff; they study files of pupils and about pupils."[485]

Inspectors evaluate whether the standards are upheld as a way to promote good quality of education depending on the context. This happens usually in the domains (or areas) of quality, organization, management, teaching and learning as well as the school as a whole.[486] They supervise the implementation of school curriculum; help diagnose the problems and shortcomings of the implementation of the curriculum; identify some of the discipline problems encountered in schools; monitor and improve teaching and learning in schools; and provide guidance to schools on how they can improve.[487]

Since St. Maarten is a small community, the Inspectorate had to focus more on what the school wanted to accomplish and how to cooperate for the benefit of the pupils.488 Inspectors were well known and had some social influence. As for their work, Asha told us that they had to follow the official policy with a margin of freedom, which was possible because of the physical and cultural distance between the islands of the Netherlands Antilles. She recalls her school had "*inspectrices*," although they were private schools489. So it was a two-way street. They had to abide by the *landsverordeningen* and the directives from the ministry, as all other subsidized schools. However, as Asha put it, they still had the freedom to keep "their Christian identity, which was very important."

"Inspection was federal, including Aruba," Snijders assured us. "Gerald Peterson was in charge of all of us. That is how I came to be on such good terms with him. The

485 I See Van Bruggen, J. (2010). Inspectorates of Education in Europe; some comparative remarks about their tasks and work. *SICI*, p. 18.

486 Harris, A. & Chrispeel, J. (eds.) (2006). *Improving schools and Educational Systems: International perspectives.* New York: Routledge.

487 Kamuyu, C. (2001). How not to conduct inspections. In *East African Standard: Online Edition*. Available: http://www.eastandard.net (Accessed on 13 May 2012).

488 Country report Netherlands Antilles (2009), p. 82.

489 Although not in the same sense as in the USA, Barbados' parochial schools and the English-speaking islands, in St. Maarten, schools like the Christian Hillside School got governmental subsidies.

decentralization that was introduced is very good. However, I wish the islands had stayed in contact. They are all too small to be isolated."

Two non-inspectors gave input on what they recalled about the inspectors. For Spring, it was that "only the 6th graders have exams via the inspectorate, the others not". Millicent remembered that "the inspector used to come from Curaçao (Sprokke) for the 10th class exams."

Our interviewee Buncamper had not only been a teacher, but also an inspector for education (*voortgezet onderwijs*). She was qualified since "the Reuven diploma was accepted as equivalent of secondary education on all 3 Windward Islands to a MA."

In 1987/1988, Larmonie was appointed Inspector of Education (*basisonderwijs*). His task was to "check on the level of education that laws are kept, evaluate performance, report to the minister or department". When those conditions were not met, he was of the opinion that "you cannot punish the schools or teachers. If you do not give them the right training and tools, you cannot blame them for being ineffective. So I made the choice to only guide the teachers". In those days, one inspector controlled all the schools. Before him, during the McKay period, the inspector for elementary education was Smith. It is interesting to note that during this period, he was the first residing inspector of the Windward Islands (i.e. not coming from Aruba or Curaçao). He resided next to the Anglican Church on Backstreet. He remembered that the exams were coordinated by the inspector. Besides, there was no training to become an inspector. As for the impact of the federal government, he told us that "in the last 15 years, the influence of the federal government has been minimal, at least, at the level of inspection."

Hodge, another interviewee, was also an inspector. After having been a teacher for several years, he became part of the school management. From 1974-1980, he was principal. After that, from 1980—1997, he was the inspector of primary education (*hoofd van dienst: Kleuter and speciaal onderwijs*). Later, he became director of the dept. of education when, as he put it, "one person went away, and a colleague thought that I was the man for the job."

Concerning his payment and job, he found that "it was a good salary. Scale 12 as inspector. Then I went to scale 14 and stayed there. As inspector I had to inspect the

curriculum and the process of education. It was all about lesson preparation and evaluation, and classroom work. I would go to school, check with the administration, go into the classrooms, about twice or three times. After that, I would give my conclusions. After two or three months, I would go back to see if and how they were implementing my suggestions. At the end of the day, we would have a discussion on their performance." As for the teachers, who he encountered, he told us that "sometimes, you used to meet under-qualified teachers, for instance, kindergarten teachers in primary school classes. The school would complain that it was up to them to say who would teach where, but I would reply that that was not so. That was a prerogative of the federal government: to say what kinds of teachers should teach and where."

Scott, another one of our interviewees, also became an inspector in 1995. She was appointed for Kindergartens in the Windward Islands. In 2000, she became inspector for both Kindergartens and Primary Schools at federal level. She felt that the "freedom of education meant that the school boards are free to shape the education given at schools. The island government must execute '*kerndoelen'* by delegation via the '*gedeputeerd*,' Mrs. Wescott Williams, and via the department of Quincy Harrigan. They must take into account the '*kerndoelen'* issued by the Ministry of Education of the federal government. And the inspector must check on the quality and school-class interaction."

The inspectors came from different places "the inspector came from Aruba. When Aruba became 'separate', they started coming from Curaçao. Lastly, the inspectorate was founded here for the Windward Islands."

FINAL REMARKS

Our attempt to string together a narrative covering about 50 years can never do justice to all the dimensions of this period. However, since education matters and St. Maarten is a young community, there is a real need to collect, narrate and analyze its story.

With this research, we have tried to tap into the historical period between 1954-2000, seeking to uncover the 'mood' about education in those years. That explains why we focused on interviews and questionnaires. It was necessary to give a voice to the people, who were part of the establishment and development of the educational system of the Dutch half of the Island.

In Part One, we spoke about the Dutch Antilles in general and St. Maarten in particular. We discussed the effects of slavery and what came after emancipation. Both before and after the restructuration of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1954, education had been shaped essentially by the different religious denominations in the islands. The schooling for the island peoples developed from being an almost non-existing entity to a well-structured system, which resembled that of the Netherlands. Despite being in the Caribbean, far away from The Netherlands and with a different first language (namely English), the Dutch influence was felt on the structure of the educational system more than on its content. In fact, Curaçao affected St. Maarten's education much more than The Netherlands or 'the Kingdom'.

The on-going discussion about the language of instruction exemplifies St. Maarten's nature as an island that is located at the crossroads between Europe, Latin America and North America. Oddly enough, despite the existence of pupils, students and teachers from other Caribbean nations, the Caribbean did not really shape St. Maarten's educational system until the foundation of the MAC and the Seventh-Day Adventist School. These schools had structural links with other English-speaking regional entities rather than with Curaçao and the Netherlands.

As a result, St. Maarten presents a mixed educational landscape. The decision to opt for English while partly keeping Dutch as a language of instruction responds to the crossroads nature of the community. It gives students a chance to communicate in both

languages and to study in the USA, Canada, but also the Netherlands. Some of the interviewees have, therefore, underlined that however confusing it may appear, it still is beneficial for the younger generations to learn Dutch.

St. Maarten has not had a really turbulent history with big changes. The Statute of 1954 and the dismantling of the Antilles in 2010 have been turning points, but not really critical moments. Losing the Dutch nationality would have impacted St. Maarten more negatively than remaining a nation within the Kingdom of the Netherlands separate from its big sister Curaçao. In other words, the people of St. Maarten have never had the Statute as a daily guideline, especially since their involvement was not always requested as such. In a way, after 50 years, it seems as if the big bang is yet to come.

The research in Part Two reflects the respondents' reaction towards several issues on education. The twofold methodology was helpful for us to gather information, which would otherwise not have been available. The questionnaires we initiated created a context for the interviews of people from different representative groups of educators, who were active at some point between 1954 and 2000. Not all the results of the questionnaires were integrated into our research, but functioned as a foundation. They can be used in a further study and/or publication.

Education in St. Maarten has been shaped in first instance by the Dutch. This is completely valid for the entire structural system and partially so for its content. The other influential player has always been Curaçao, the seat of the Netherlands Antilles' government. Though the Statute allowed for modifications, the Dutch educational system was embedded in St. Maarten through Curaçao. Although the students longed for St. Maarten-related curricular contents, the input of Curaçao was felt throughout. It was only after local students became teachers on the Island that topics about St. Maarten found their place in the curriculum.

The flexibility of the local inspectors seems to have created some room for informal local adaptations. Oddly enough, now that the Island has become a nation, its educational system has once more been changed following the lead of pedagogical theories and practices dominant in The Netherlands, i.e. Foundation-Based Education. However, even here some negotiating took place. This methodology was embraced because it was paid in

full by the Dutch government, but it became the beginning of a revision of the curriculum and textbooks. St. Maarten has finally taken center stage.

Education in St. Maarten does not seem to have gone through radical policy changes. Much occurred through a natural 'evolution'. To be honest, it is difficult to disagree with Oostindie when he says that the Netherlands did not have any real colonial policy for the Antilles. The Kingdom succeeded in 'Dutchifying' Suriname, whose people have kept the cultural reference to the Netherlands, even after their independence in 1975, but it failed miserably in St. Maarten (Saba and St. Eustatius). In St. Maarten, *evolution happened in continuity*. The factors behind the change and continuity in education include particular people as well as social and natural phenomena: the Sisters, MacKay, the arrival of cable TV, tourism, the later hurricanes, and the appearance of individuals, who founded schools based on their convictions and vision. Hence, many changes occurred through circumstance rather than by some well-planned design.

On the other hand, when we pay attention to the interviews and questionnaires, we can conclude that the people of St. Maarten do not have the feeling that education let them down. It is probably only now that people are beginning to question whether and to which extent schools are able to positively influence young people. In the past, they believed that schooling —however foreign its curriculum may have been at times— did actually help them to find their niche in the world. Students took education as it was given to them and turned it into a tool to survive on the Island, in the USA, Canada, The Netherlands, but also elsewhere. The Coat of Arms of St. Maarten summarizes it well: *Semper progrediens* – "Always progressing". Education has always been progressing without radical breaks from the past.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Name	*Capacity*	*Date of the interview*
Patricia Lourens	- Program Manager of *Bureau for Education Research, Policy, Planning and Innovations* (BERPPI), Island Government of St. Maarten. - School Principle of the *St. Maarten Academy* - Instructor of World Civilization at the *University of Saint Martin*.	31 October 2005
Stanley Hodge	- Former Head of *Education Department of Welfare & Humanitarian affairs* of the Island Government of St. Maarten. - Student at one of the schools of Dominican Sisters - Teacher - Principal - Inspector of Education.	04 November 2005
Clinton Spring	- Executive Director of Methodist Agogic Center (MAC). - Lecturer and curriculum developer at the MAC.	15 December 2005
Clay Holiday	- Finance Manager of the MAC	05 January 2006
Glenville Brown	- Principle of the MAC 1 (Browlia F. Maillard Campus), St. John Estate.	10 January 2006
Cedrick Hodge	Principle of the MAC 2 (Rev. John Gumbs campus), Betty's Estate Rd).	11 January 2006
Piet Koenis	Director of Stichting Kadaster & Hypotheekwezen St. Maarten	23 December 2005
Blanca Hodge	Director of Philipsburg Jubilee Library	28 December 2005
Ascha Stevens	Superintendent and co-founder of the Hillside Christian Schools	02 November 2006
Oldine Bryson-Pantophlet	Head of Public Schools at the Island's Education Department. Island Government.	03 November 2006
Alfonso Blijden	Head archivist at Ministry of General Affairs. Island Government.	06 November 2006
Jane Buncamper	In education since 1957	07 November 2006
Marlese Lake-Bass	Principle of the Seventh Day Adventist School	08 November 2006
Felix Bell	Former student at the Oranje School in the 1950s and	09 November 2006

	John Phillips School	
Claire Elshot-Aventurin	- Former student at St. Joseph School - President of the Teachers' Union Association - Founder of the so-called *undocumented/illegal* schools.	12 November 2006
Maxime Larmonie	- Director of WAVE (a foundation to promote adult education, both vocational and upgrading) - Former teacher - Former principal in Curaçao - Former inspector of the elementary schools in St. Maarten.	16 November 2006
Helmich Snijders	- Former principal of the Oranje School - Co-founder of the Christian Hillside school.	17 November 2006
Frankie Haddock	- Teacher and Acting Principal of the Oranje School. - Former student of the Oranje School.	18 November 2006
Quincy Harrigan	- Interim Head of Department of Education (Island government) - Formal an elementary school teacher - Policy-maker for BERPPI (*Bureau for Education Research, Policy, Planning and Innovations)*	21 November 2006
Claire Connor-Sant	- Former student, teacher, and principal of the St. Joseph's School - Former President of the Catholic School Board	21 November 2006
Patricia Scott	- Current inspector of elementary education (Federal Government) - Former teacher at the Beatrix School - Worked with the McKay English program.	22 November 2006
Millicent de Weever	- Office manager at the Speentjes Law Firm - Former student of the St. Joseph's School - Island commissioner	23 November 2006
Mathias Voges	- President of the Catholic School Board - Acting Governor of St. Maarten - Author of: "History of St. Maarten" and "100 years of the Dominican Sisters in St. Maarten".	24 November 2006
Pieter Streefkerk	- Former teacher of the Hill School - Former principal of the St. Maarten Academy,	27 November 2006

		Milton Peters College, Sundial School, and Martin Luther School.	
Josianne Fleming-Artsen	-	President of the University of St. Martin	27 November 2006
	-	Former teacher and principal of the MAC, Methodist Agogic Centre	
	-	Board member of the St. Maarten Academy	
	-	In education since 1970.	
Gwen Robertina	-	Former staff of the University of St. Marten	03 December 2006
	-	Former teacher and task manager of innovations	
	-	Author of school books.	
	-	In education in St. Maarten for 24 years.	
Oralie Boirard	-	Currently Site-based coordinator for Foundation-Based Education (FBE)	07 December 2006
	-	Former student, teacher, and Principal at the Lionel Connor School.	

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Online: http://www.ngoaingutinhoc.com/milton/

For former teachers, students, members of school management, government personnel.

Response: resp. 54, 122, 25, 19

DIRECT (SAME QUESTIONNAIRE):

From former teachers 34, students 198 , members of school management 33, government personnel 45.

TOTAL:

For former teachers (88),

Students (320),

Members of school management (58),

Government personnel (64)

EXAMPLE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE WITH REMARKS:

A) For former teachers (88)

1. What school network did you work for?

Catholic	Protestant	Public	Private	Total
38	29	20	1	88

2. During which years have you taught at school?

1950-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	76-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	1996-2000
3	4	2	10	13	15	7	9	14	11

Some teachers worked in the different time frames. The number of teachers represent where they worked the most

3. What classes (groups) did you teach?

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
8	5	15	22	18	20

Some teachers worked in different classes. The number represents in which class the teacher worked the most.

4. What subject did you teach?

All	Dutch	P.E.	Religion	Other
66	5	1	7	9

Overlapping of different subjects

5. At which school level did you work?

Pre-scholar	Primary	Secondary	Other
3	73	8	4

Some teachers have been moving from the different levels

6. How was the class composition?

➢Boys	➢Girls	boys = girls
11	71	6

7. Did you have children that required special attention?

physically handicapped Yes	slightly handicapped Yes	Hyperactive Yes	Other Yes	No
1	3	8	12	64

8. How was the relationship between teachers?

Good school spirit	Good spirit -/- work groups	Good work groups + spirit	Good work spirit + weak/bad spirit	Pragmatic + limited to necessary contacts	Every teacher an island	other
45	12	15	7	2	2	5

9. How was the relationship between teachers and management?

Initiative form above	Good working relationship	Management not without advice of teachers	There was no relationship	other
23	44	7	3	11

10. What social group did you belong too?

St. Maarten	the rest of the Antilles	The Netherlands	Suriname	Other
30	29	13	10	6

11. How was the relationship between teachers and students?

very formal	rather formal	flexible	amicable	poor
49	22	9	3	5

12. How much freedom in curriculum matters did you have?

none	little	some	considerable, depending on my own judgment
21	18	33	16

13. Did you find the curriculum to be in keeping with the local reality of your student?

no, I did not most of the time	only to a limited extend	in general, yes	almost all of the time, yes
66	12	6	4

14. Where did you get your teaching material from?

St. Maarten	rest of the Antilles	The Netherlands	Suriname	school	your own
23	12	25	8	11	9

15. How did parents participate in the education of their children?

Never interest	interest at beginning and end of the year	interest only when I made an appointment	spontaneously and at different times throughout the year
11	23	40	14

16. What was the level of formal education of the parents?

none	very reduced	finished primary school	(some) secondary education	highly educated
6	14	23	29	16

17. What was the financial background of the parents?

below the poverty line	modest but enough	comfortable	more than comfortable
19	33	24	12

18. What was the family situation of most student?

orphans	living with a relative other than their parents	living with a single father	living with a single mother	living with their mother and father
5	16	11	34	22

19. What person or event was the most influential on your career as an educator during your year of service and why? (Either inside or outside the school)

School	Parents	friend	church	religious sisters
student's future	teacher training	Identity building	Local government	Politics

20. Was your income as a teacher enough to support yourself (and your family)?

yes, it was more than enough	yes, it was just enough	no, I needed a second job	no, my partner has to contribute too	no, I needed help from the government, the church, others
19	42	5	19	3

21. Any other comment you might want to make or information you might want to give?

no	This research is needed	Contact older teachers also	Document the research for future		

B) For former students (320 respondents)

1. What school network did you attend?

Catholic	Protestant	Public	Private	other
123	91	86	4	16

2. During which years have you been a pupil or student?

1950-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	76-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	1996-2000
15	17	27	33	77	54	46	30	12	9

3. What school (s) did you go to? (highest)

Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Other
	29	223	68

4. What subjects were your favorites and why?

subjects							
History	Geography	Math	Dutch	English	Drawing	needlework	Hoeden vlechten
religion							

Why?								
teacher	Time of the day	easy	Friends in that class	Learned the most	storyline	challenge	church	fun

Those are the answers that came up the most

5. How was the class composition in general?

➢Boys	➢Girls	boys = girls
76	222	22

6. Where there children in your classroom (yourself included) that required special attention?

No	Yes	physically handicapped Yes	slightly handicapped Yes	Hyperactive Yes	Other Yes
237	25	6	18	19	15

7. How do you think the relationship between teachers was?

Good school spirit	Good spirit -/- work groups	Good work groups + spirit	Good work spirit + weak/bad spirit	Pragmatic + limited to necessary contacts	Every teacher an island	other
241	23	17	11	6	8	14

8. How do you think the relationship between teachers and management was?

Initiative form above	Good working relationship	Management not without advice of teachers	There was no relationship	other
63	212	11	8	26

9. What social group did you belong too?

St. Maarten	the rest of the Antilles	The Netherlands	Suriname	Other
223	58	19	14	6

10. How was the relationship between teachers and students?

very formal	rather formal	flexible	amicable	poor
178	98	24	7	13

11. How much freedom did you have in choosing your subjects?

none, because everything was determine by: □The Netherlands □The Antillean Government □The Island representative □The Inspectorate □The school management	little	some	considerable, depending on my own judgement.
301 (school management)	9	2	8

12. Did you find what you have to study to be in keeping with your own reality?

no, I did not most of the time	only to a limited extend	in general, yes	almost all of the time, yes
198	54	42	26

13. Where did you get your books and learning materials from?

St. Maarten	rest of the Antilles	The Netherlands	Suriname	school	your own	library	other student	other
87	49	54	14	88	0	24	0	4

14. How did your parents participate in your education?

Never interest	interest at beginning and end of the year	interest only when they had an appointment	spontaneously and at different times throughout the year

15. What was the level of formal education of your parents?

none	very reduced	finished primary school	(some) secondary education	highly educated
24	56	122	90	28

16. What was the financial background of your parents?

below the poverty line	modest but enough	comfortable	more than comfortable
54	134	78	54

17. What was your family situation?

orphans	living with a relative other than their parents	living with a single father	living with a single mother	living with their mother and father
16	45	23	67	147

18. What was the family situation of most of your classmates?

orphans	living with a relative other than their parents	living with a single father	living with a single mother	living with their mother and father
11	47	26	45	191

19. What person or event was the most influential on you during your student years? and why? (Either inside or outside the school)

School	Parents	friend	church	religious sisters
dream	family	neighbourhood	tv	Fellow students

20. Who financed your school years? You may choose more than one

my parents	governmental scholarship	other family members	church	myself	other
254	7	40	11	1	7

21. Any other comment you might want to make or information you might want to give?

Contact my classmates	Will the info be confidential	School was not bad	The sisters were great	

C) For members of the school management (58 respondents)

1. What school network did you work for?

		Name of school
Catholic	23	
Protestant	19	
Public	16	
Private	0	

2. During which years did you worked in school management?

1950-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	76-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	1996-2000
3	2	0	14	3	6	11	10	4	5

Some worked in the different time frames. The number represent where they worked the most

3. What was your position within the school structure?

Director	principal	other		
5	9	44		

4. Did you also teach next to your management-related task?

Yes	No
43	15

5. At which school level did you work?

Pre-scholar	Primary	Secondary	Other
0	41	14	3

6. How was the school composition in general?

more boys than girls	more girls than boys	equally composed of boys and girls
15	39	4

7. Were there children that required special attention?

physically handicapped	slightly handicapped	hyperactive	other	No
4	7	17	9	21

8. How was the relationship between the management members?

Good school spirit	Good spirit -/- work groups	Good work groups + spirit	Good work spirit + weak/bad spirit	Pragmatic + limited to necessary contacts	Every teacher an island	other
34	11	2	1	2	1	7

9. How was the relationship between teachers and management?

Initiative form above	Good working relationship	Management not without advice of teachers	There was no relationship	other
4	39	3	3	9

10. How was the relationship between management and students?

very formal	rather formal	difficult	cordial	Very spontaneous
29	11	7	8	3

11. How was the relationship between management and parents?

non existent	very formal	rather formal	difficult	cordial	very spontaneous
0	4	9	11	25	9

12. How was the relationship between management and governmental instances?

non existent	very formal	rather formal	difficult	cordial	very spontaneous
0	10	9	15	19	5

13. What social group did you belong too?

St. Maarten	rest of the Antilles	The Netherlands	Suriname	other
23	18	11	3	3

14. How much freedom did you have in designing the school curriculum?

none	little	some	considerable, depending on my own judgement
9	11	21	17

15. Did you find the curriculum to be in keeping with the local reality of the school?

no, I did not most of the time	only to a limited extend	in general, yes	almost all of the time, yes
19	9	14	16

16. Where did the school get the teaching material from?

St. Maarten	rest of the Antilles	The Netherlands	Suriname	school	Other
11	9	22	5	4	7

17. How did the parents participate in the education of their children?

Never interest	interest at beginning and end of the year	interest only when I made an appointment	spontaneously and at different times throughout the year
9	19	17	13

18. What was the level of formal education of the parents?

none	very reduced	finished primary school	(some) secondary education	highly educated
2	7	21	19	9

19. What was the financial background of the parents?

below the poverty line	modest but enough	comfortable	more than comfortable
4	21	19	14

20. What was the family situation of most students?

orphans	living with a relative other than their parents	living with a single father	living with a single mother	living with their mother and father
1	19	9	22	7

20. Was your income as a member of the management team enough to support yourself (and your family)?

yes, it was more than enough	yes, it was just enough	no, I needed a second job	no, my partner has to contribute too	no, I needed help from the government, the church, others
29	21	1	7	0

21. What person or event was the most influential on your career during your year of service and why? (Either inside or outside the school)

School	Parents	friends	church	religious sisters
student's future	Career	Identity building	Local government	Politics

22. Any other comment you might want to make or information you might want to give?

Locals got a change too late	Curriculum needs to be re-implemented	Salaries not in line with cost of living	Cooperation with The Netherlands should continue	Working closely with Caribbean
Antilleanization should be promoted				

D) For governmental personnel (64 respondents)

1. Did you work for the government of…

The Netherlands	the Dutch Antilles (federal government)	Curaçao (island government)	St. Maarten (island government)
12	23	12	17

2. What was your function?

Council	Civil servant	secretary	other	
2	40	12	10	

3. During which years?

1950-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	76-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	1996-2000
4	7	4	9	8	6	12	9	3	2

4. Did you also teach or give training next to your governmental job? If so, what kind?

Yes	No
23	41
School management, language workshops, maths, curriculum development, attendance follow up, remedial training	

5. How was the relationship between government and school management?

Good school spirit	Good spirit -/- work groups	Good work groups + spirit	Good work spirit + weak/bad spirit	Pragmatic + limited to necessary contacts	Every teacher an island	other
29	14	9	6	2	2	2

6. What social group did you belong too?

St. Maarten	the rest of the Antilles	The Netherlands	Suriname	Other
21	24	5	3	11

7. Did you find the curriculum to be in keeping with the local reality of the school?

no, I did not most of the time	only to a limited extend	in general, yes	almost all of the time, yes
29	18	7	10

8. How was education financed?

Government	Church
61	3

9. What person or event was the most influential on your career during your year of service and why?

School	Colleagues	friends	church	religious sisters
Love for island	family		Local government	Politics

10. Any other comment you might want to make or information you might want to give?

N/A

APPENDIX 3: PROTOCOL

APPENDIX G

1987

PROTOCOL

Protocol of cooperation between the Government of the Netherlands Antilles and the Executive Council of the Island Territory of St. Maarten with regard to the further implementation of English as language of instruction in the educational system in St. Maarten.

The Government of the Netherlands Antilles and the Executive Council of the Island Territory of St. Maarten

Considering:

1. - that the Minister of Education is responsible for the regulation of education in general and for the determination of the language of instruction in particular;
2. - that the Minister of Education and the Executive Council of St. Maarten are jointly responsible for the execution of educational laws;
3. - that according to article 9 par. 1 of the "Landsverordening Basisonderwijs" English has been language of instruction in the first two grades of the primary schools in the Windward Islands since 1979, while Dutch is used from the third grade onwards;
4. - that par. 2 of this article prescribes that the Minister can decide that English be the language of instruction in the other grades, after having heard the competent authority;
5. - that the Minister of Education in his "Brief aan het Onderwijsveld (1)" of September 20, 1982 expressed the desire to have English as the language of instruction in the primary schools in the Windward Islands;
6. - that in the same letter, the Minister of Education instructed the Island Territories of St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius to think about the ways in which they wish to plan the changes in the language of instruction;
7. - that the Minister of Education and the Executive Council of Sint Maarten have both expressed the desire to have English as language of instruction throughout the educational system in St. Maarten;
8. - that both authorities have expressed their desire to maintain a close cooperation in the planning of the further implementation of English as language of instruction in the schools on St. Maarten;

Have Agreed that:

Article 1.

The Minister of Education and the Executive Council of St. Maarten shall do all in their power to ensure the cooperation with regard to the further implementation of English as language of instruction in the educational system in St. Maarten.

Article 2.

The Minister of Education and the Executive Council of St. Maarten will install a committee to draft a proposal for the further implementation of English as language of instruction in the schools on St. Maarten.

Article 3.

The Minister of Education and the Executive Council of St. Maarten will apoint the members of the committee upon the recommendation of the Commissioner of Education and the Director of the Department of Education.

Article 4.

The committee consisting of representatives of the Federal and Island Government, will be charged with the task of presenting to both Governments a proposal for the implementation of English as language of instruction in the schools on St. Maarten and of advising on the position of other foreign languages within the educational system.

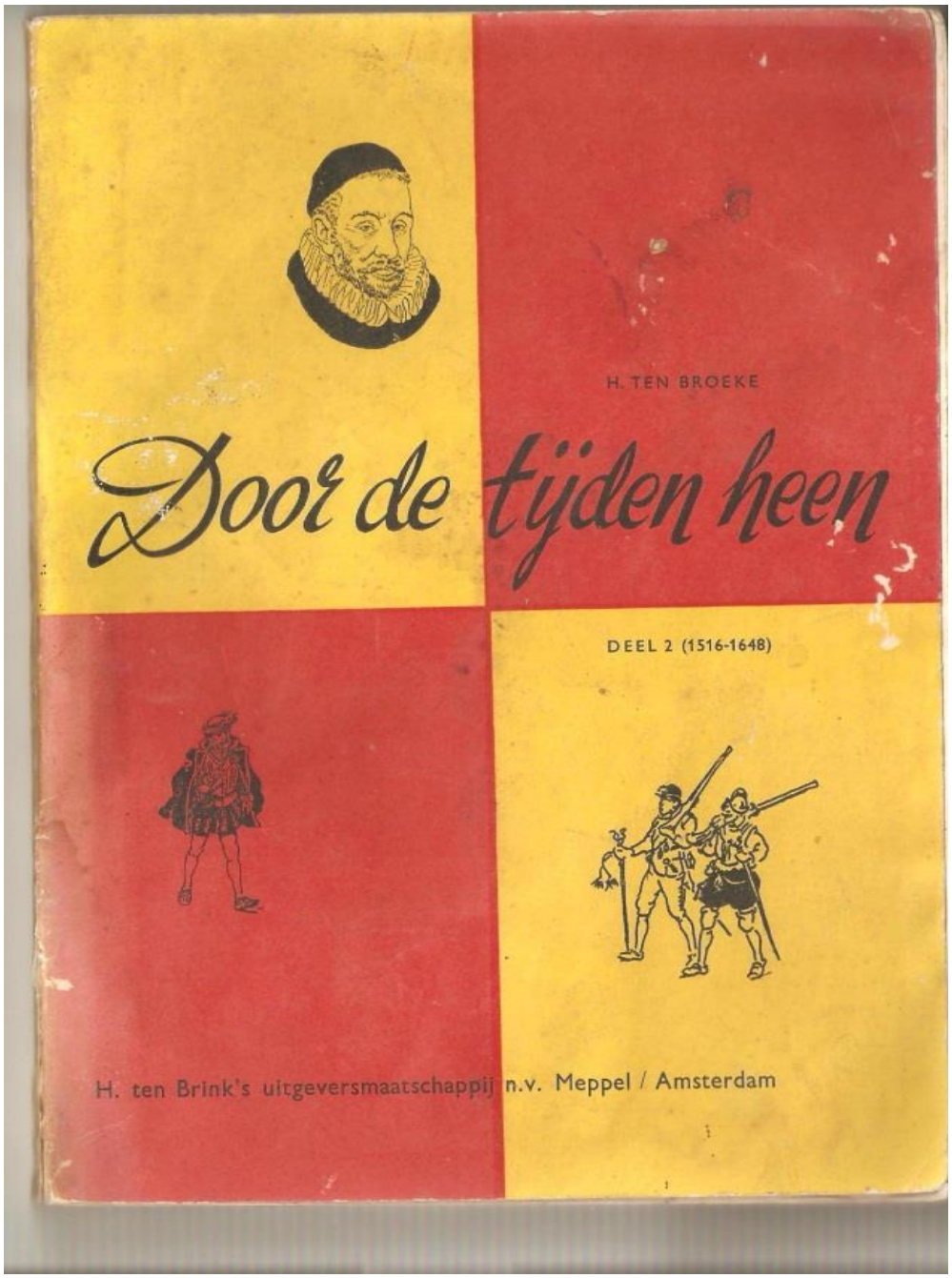
Article 5.

The committee will establish a rule of order wherein a working schedule, the manner of convening meetings, the manner of handling proposals and other procedures relevant to the operating of the committee in connection with the execution of its assignment are to be outlined. The rule of order has to be approved by the Commissioner of Education and the Director of the Departement of Education.

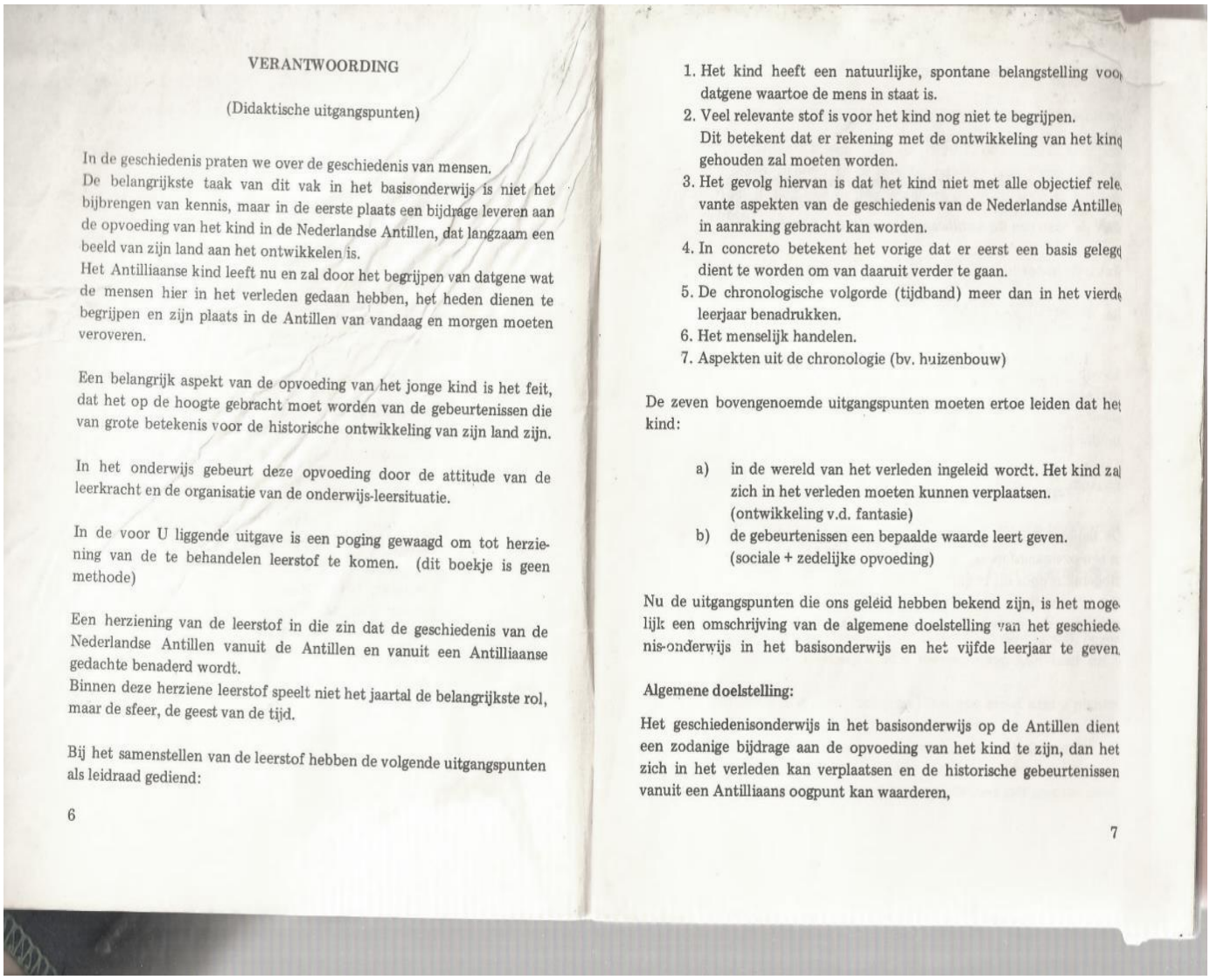
Article 6.

The Minister of Education and the Executive Council of St. Maarten commit themselves to establish the conditions necessary for the realisation of the agreements laid down herein.

APPENDIX 4: DOOR DE TIJDEN HEEN



APPENDIX 5: DOOR DE TIJDEN HEEN



VERANTWOORDING

(Didaktische uitgangspunten)

In de geschiedenis praten we over de geschiedenis van mensen.
De belangrijkste taak van dit vak in het basisonderwijs is niet het bijbrengen van kennis, maar in de eerste plaats een bijdrage leveren aan de opvoeding van het kind in de Nederlandse Antillen, dat langzaam een beeld van zijn land aan het ontwikkelen is.
Het Antilliaanse kind leeft nu en zal door het begrijpen van datgene wat de mensen hier in het verleden gedaan hebben, het heden dienen te begrijpen en zijn plaats in de Antillen van vandaag en morgen moeten veroveren.

Een belangrijk aspekt van de opvoeding van het jonge kind is het feit, dat het op de hoogte gebracht moet worden van de gebeurtenissen die van grote betekenis voor de historische ontwikkeling van zijn land zijn.

In het onderwijs gebeurt deze opvoeding door de attitude van de leerkracht en de organisatie van de onderwijs-leersituatie.

In de voor U liggende uitgave is een poging gewaagd om tot herziening van de te behandelen leerstof te komen. (dit boekje is geen methode)

Een herziening van de leerstof in die zin dat de geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Antillen vanuit de Antillen en vanuit een Antilliaanse gedachte benaderd wordt.
Binnen deze herziene leerstof speelt niet het jaartal de belangrijkste rol, maar de sfeer, de geest van de tijd.

Bij het samenstellen van de leerstof hebben de volgende uitgangspunten als leidraad gediend:

1. Het kind heeft een natuurlijke, spontane belangstelling voo datgene waartoe de mens in staat is.
2. Veel relevante stof is voor het kind nog niet te begrijpen.
   Dit betekent dat er rekening met de ontwikkeling van het kin gehouden zal moeten worden.
3. Het gevolg hiervan is dat het kind niet met alle objectief rele vante aspekten van de geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Antille in aanraking gebracht kan worden.
4. In concreto betekent het vorige dat er eerst een basis gelegd dient te worden om van daaruit verder te gaan.
5. De chronologische volgorde (tijdband) meer dan in het vierd leerjaar benadrukken.
6. Het menselijk handelen.
7. Aspekten uit de chronologie (bv. huizenbouw)

De zeven bovengenoemde uitgangspunten moeten ertoe leiden dat he kind:

a) in de wereld van het verleden ingeleid wordt. Het kind za zich in het verleden moeten kunnen verplaatsen.
   (ontwikkeling v.d. fantasie)
b) de gebeurtenissen een bepaalde waarde leert geven.
   (sociale + zedelijke opvoeding)

Nu de uitgangspunten die ons geleid hebben bekend zijn, is het moge lijk een omschrijving van de algemene doelstelling van het geschiede nis-onderwijs in het basisonderwijs en het vijfde leerjaar te geven.

Algemene doelstelling:

Het geschiedenisonderwijs in het basisonderwijs op de Antillen dient een zodanige bijdrage aan de opvoeding van het kind te zijn, dan het zich in het verleden kan verplaatsen en de historische gebeurtenissen vanuit een Antilliaans oogpunt kan waarderen,

APPENDIX 6: LETTER FROM FRATER JAN HEERKENS

9. **Letter Frater Jan Heerkens**

Archief Fraters CMM
Gasthuisring 54
5041 DT Tilburg
telefoon 013 - 5432777

Postbus 90105
5000 LA Tilburg
fax 013 - 5441405

Tilburg, 03 maart 2004

Milton A. George
Waversebaan 74
3001 Heverlee, België
tel. 00 32 498-522 771

Uw brief/
verzoek dd.: 23-02-2004
Onderwerp: boek 'Zonnig Nederlands' & 'Nos Tera'

Geachte Milton A. George,

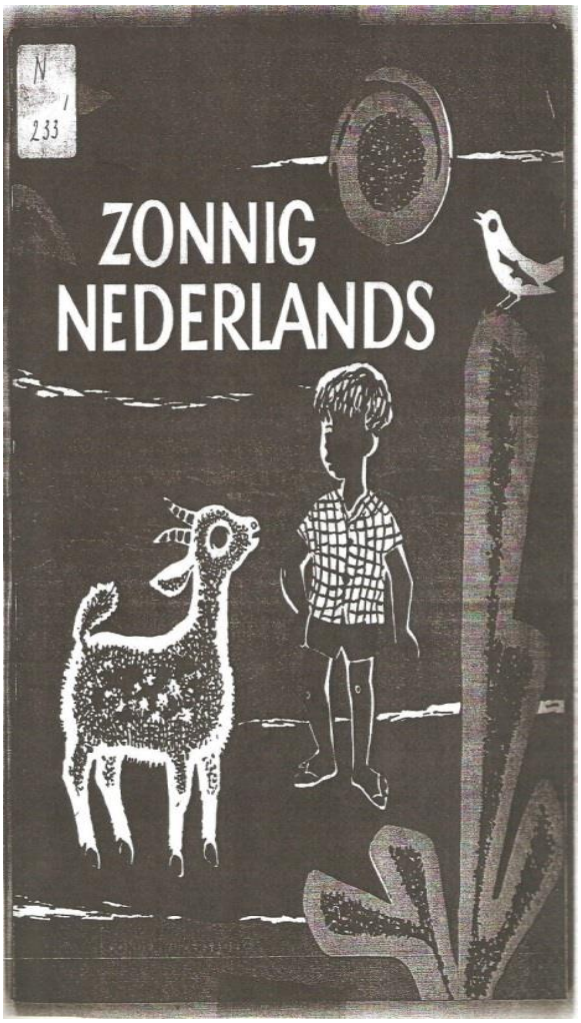
Hierbij een aantal kopies (22) uit genoemde 'boeken'.
De methode 'Zonnig Nederlands' bestaat totaal uit 16 delen voor de leerlingen, met aparte boeken voor de onderwijzer. Naast de 1e en 2e druk voor de katholieke scholen verscheen later een nevenuitgave voor niet-katholieke scholen. Voor de geplande herziene uitgave: zie bijgevoegd knipsel. De methode 'Zonnig Nederlands' is gebaseerd op de principes van de in Nederland, door de fraters Victor van Nispen en Theodoor Jansen, ontwikkelde taalmethode 'Groeiende Taal' (1951-1959).
De methode 'Nos Tera' bestaat uit een voorloper en 4 delen, totaal ± 500 blz.

Met vriendelijke groeten,

fr. J. Heerkens

frater Jan Heerkens

APPENDIX 7: ZONNIG NEDERLANDS



Zonnig Nederlands

EEN ANTILLIAANSE METHODE VOOR DE R.-K. SCHOLEN

1

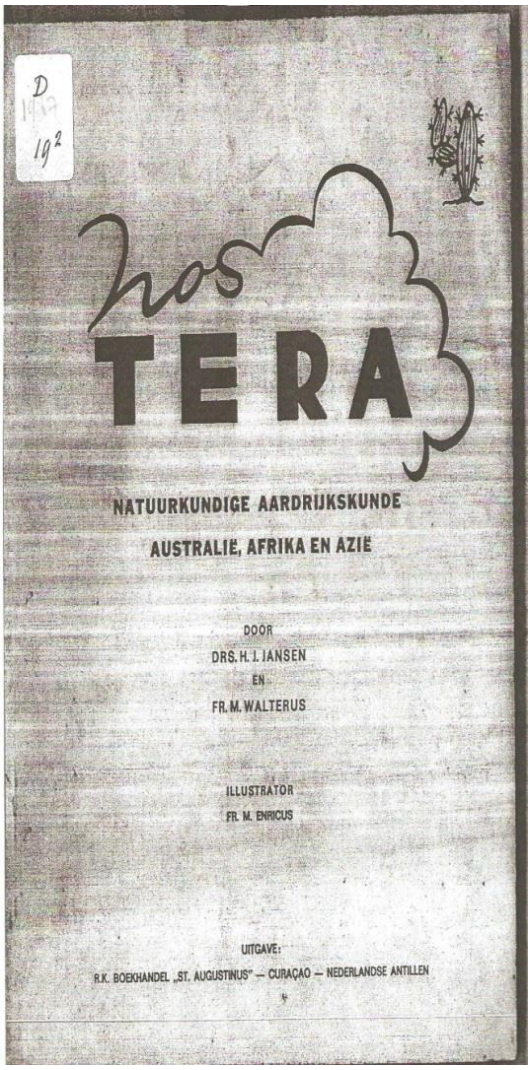
Voorloper

voor mei-juni-juli van het eerste leerjaar
ONDERWIJZERSBOEK

1961

Uitgave: R.-K. Boekhandel „St.-Augustinus" - Curaçao - Ned. Ant.

APPENDIX 8: NOS TERA



nos
TERA

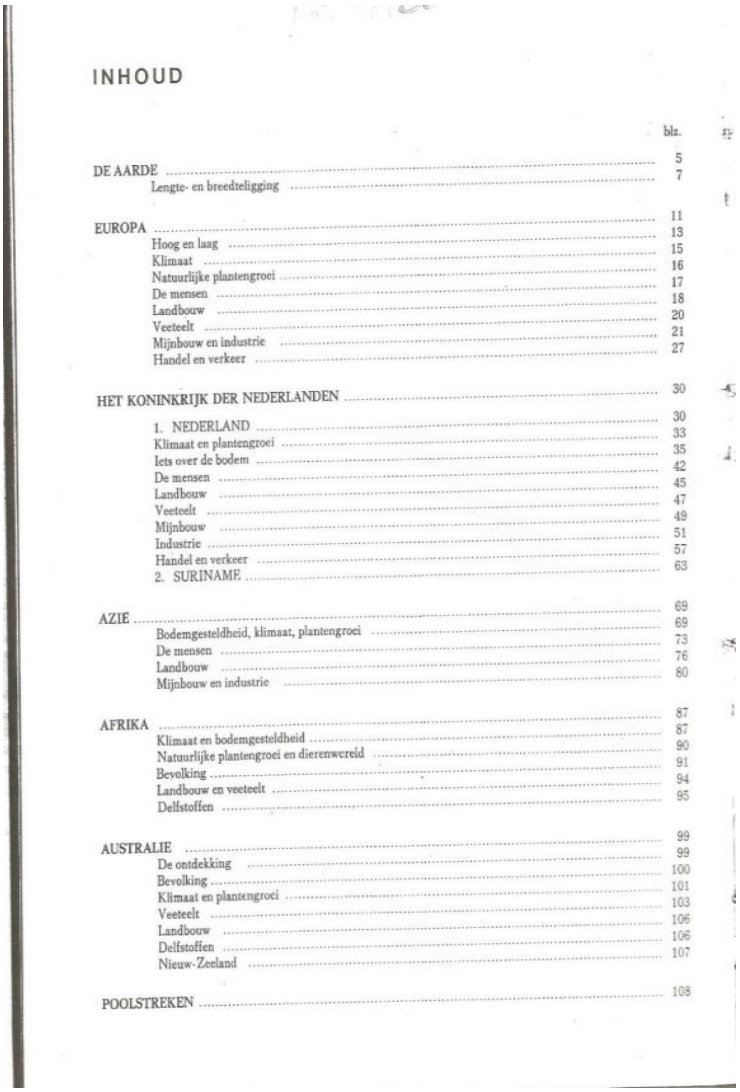
NATUURKUNDIGE AARDRIJKSKUNDE

AUSTRALIË, AFRIKA EN AZIË

DOOR
DRS. H. J. IANSEN
EN
FR. M. WALTERUS

ILLUSTRATOR
FR. M. ENRICUS

UITGAVE:
R.K. BOEKHANDEL „ST. AUGUSTINUS" — CURAÇAO — NEDERLANDSE ANTILLEN



INHOUD

APPENDIX 9: EXPENDITURES

D) Number of schools

Kindergarten	13
Primary	13
Secondary	5
University	1

E) Educational Expenditure

1. Estimated expenditure on Education
   - 40 percent of total government expenditure
   - 8 percent of G.N.P.

2. Estimated recurrent cost per pupil per year

(figures based on 1993 data)

			private	public
Kindergarten		U.S. $	1432.30	514.20
Primary	Dutch		2653.00	310.40
	Special ed		none	7,917.15
	English		1146.15	none
Secondary	Dutch			none
		Havo/Vwo	5566.15	
		Mavo	3777.80	
		Lts/Mts	5070.60	
		Ladvo/Albo	4869.15	
	English			none
	St. Maarten Academy		295.10	
	St. Dominic		N/A	
Vocational			none	3981.10
University			private	none

F) EDUCATION

Enrolment in schools:		Private	Public
Creche		unavailable	none
Kindergarten		756	301
primary	Dutch	1361	894
	English	718	none
Secondary	Dutch	1197	
	English	585	none
	Vocational	none	200
University		228	none
Total		4845	1395

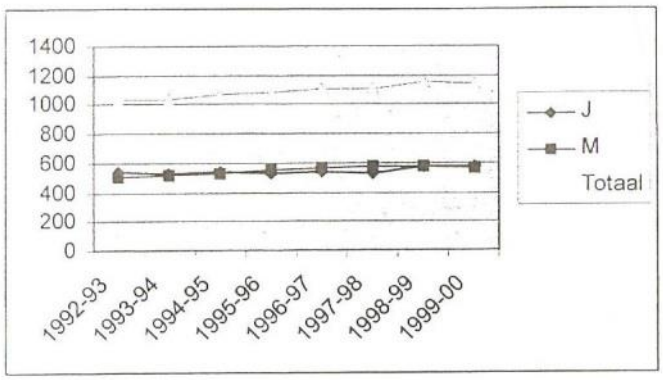
Source: Central Bureau of Statistics (St. Maarten) and the budget of expenditures and income of the island territory of St. Maarten 1994

APPENDIX 10: NUMBER OF STUDENTS

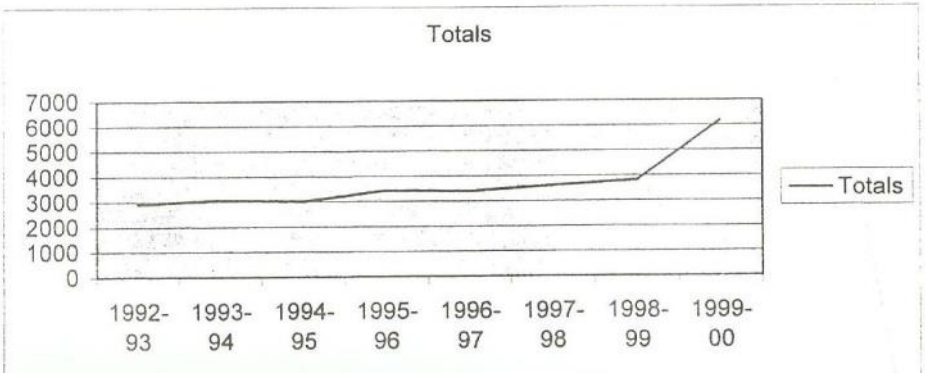
Tabel 3.4 Schoolparticipatie naar leeftijd en geslacht, Sint Maarten, 1992				
Leeftijd	man	vrouw	totaal	verschil man - vrouw
4 en 5 jaar	73,6	73,9	73,8	-0,3
6 t/m 15 jaar	95,7	95,3	95,5	0,4
16 t/m 19 jaar	54,1	55,7	54,9	-1,6
20 t/m 24 jaar	4,3	3,0	3,6	1,4
25 t/m 29 jaar	0,1	0,0	0,1	0,1

Sint Maarten

Number of pupils in Kindergarten in Sint Maarten, by gender, in the period 1992-2000.



Number of pupils in Primary Education on Sint Maarten in the period 1992-2000.



SIX

THE DIFFERENT TYPES AND ENROLLMENT OF STUDENT IN ST. MAARTEN EDUCATION

NAME OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS	LANGUAGE USED	ENROLLMENT
Oranje	Dutch	350
Dr. Martin Luther King	-	154
Lionel Conner	-	239
St. Peters Public	-	151
St. Joseph	-	157
Sister Marie Larence	-	145
Sister Borgis	-	156
Sister Magda	-	270
Regina	-	158
St. Peter Hillside	-	313
Special education	English	162
St. Dominic	-	n/a
Methodist Aggic	-	718

Source:Federal Education Department 1994

NAME OF SECONDARY SCHOOL	LANGUAGE USED	ENROLLMENT	AGE RANGE	YEARS
Milton Peters Collage	Dutch			
Lts & Hts	-	303	12-20	4 or 6
Mavo	-	392	12-16	4
Havo	-	233	12-17	5
Vwo	-	102	12-18	6
St. Maarten Academy	English	585	12-16	4
St. Dominic	-	n/a	12-14 uncomplete	2
Svat	-	200	12-16	4
Sundial	-	167	12-16	4

Source:Federal Educatin Department 1994

APPENDIX 11: WEEKLY TIME TABLE GRADE SIX (MAC)

Grade Six

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:45		Assgn Homework	Assgn Homework	Assgn Homework	Assgn Homework
8:00	Assembly	Devotion	Devotion	Devotion	Devotion
8:15		General Knowledge/ Current Events	General Knowledge/ Current Events	General Knowledge/ Current Events	General Knowledge/ Current Events
8:30	Mathematics *Mental *Mechanics	Mathematics *Mental *Mechanics	Mathematics *Mental *Mechanics	Mathematics *Mental *Mechanics	Mathematics *Mental *Mechanics
9:15	Language Arts: *Reading Compr. *Structure	Language Arts: *Reading Compr. *Vocabulary *Spelling	Language Arts *Reading Compr. *Structure	Language Arts: *Reading Compr. *Vocabulary *Spelling	Language Arts *Reading Compr. *Structure
10:00	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
10:30	Dutch	Language Arts Creative Writing	Dutch	Language Arts Creative Writing	Moral Education
11:15	Mathematics Problem Solving	Dutch	Mathematics Problem Solving	Dutch	Mathematics Problem Solving
12:00	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
12:12	Social Science	Social Science	Music/Computer	Social Science	Music/Computer
12:55	Art	General Science	Handicraft	P.E.	General Science
1:30	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal