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**Colonial careers : Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen, Rijckloff Volckertsz. van Goens and career-making in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Empire**  
Odegard, E.L.L.

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**Author:** Odegard, Erik

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## 6. Dismissing a Governor-General

*Conflicts between the XIX and Johan Maurits, 1640-1644*

Portugal erupted in rebellion against its Habsburg King Phillip IV in the winter of 1640. John, the Duke of Braganza, was then proclaimed King John (João) IV of Portugal on December 1 of that year. The news of the Portuguese rebellion placed the WIC in an awkward position as the latter had attacked Brazil as part of its strategy to weaken Spain during the Eighty Years' War. Now that Portugal, too, was at war with Spain and thus a possible ally, could the WIC continue to maintain its South Atlantic empire at the expense of Portugal? Would the Luso-Brazilians stay loyal, or at least not actively belligerent, to the company now that Portugal was independent? Or could the company perhaps even cut costs and reduce its armed forces in Brazil? These were just some of the questions confronting the WIC directors in the Republic, and the governor and council in Brazil, after December 1640, and they increasingly drove a wedge in perceptions between the directors and their governor in Brazil on issues such as maintaining the strength of the army there. The Portuguese rebellion thus sparked a period of strategic uncertainty for the WIC, exacerbating intra-company tensions that had always been latent. In this way, the winter of 1640-1641 forms a natural break between the first and second parts of Johan Maurits' tenure in Brazil. This second part of his tenure was characterized by increasingly tense relations between the company's directors in the Netherlands and their governor-general in Brazil, and these tensions ultimately led to the latter's dismissal in April 1642.

This chapter will focus on the dismissal of Johan Maurits and will place this in the context of the increasingly dire financial situation of the WIC, the Portuguese rebellion, and the changing relations between company and state in the Netherlands. Prior to April 1642, Johan Maurits had requested on several occasions to be allowed to return to the Netherlands, but these requests had all been denied by the company and the Generality, which stressed the importance of his continued presence in Brazil. By April 1642, however, these calculations had apparently changed as the XIX decided that '*We expressly and considerably request Your Excellency to remain in aforementioned Government for the period of one year (at which point the mentioned demission will be granted)*'.<sup>461</sup> Johan Maurits objected to this, arguing that he needed the express consent of the States-General before leaving Brazil. This was subsequently granted in May 1643, and Johan Maurits left the colony in May 1644, just when rebellion among the Luso-Brazilian planters was beginning to stir. The question considered in this chapter is what had changed, such that the XIX were now willing to grant this request, whereas they had previously been unwilling to do so? Strangely enough, no-one has so far studied the dismissal procedure in any detail, even though Johan Maurits' dismissal from Brazil is of the greatest importance for a proper understanding of his career path, and especially the question of whether his being allowed to leave Brazil represented a defeat or a victory on his part.

Charles Boxer argued that Johan Maurits was loath to leave. More recently, however, Simon Groenveld argued that the sources could equally well be read from a perspective that

<sup>461</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 9, second part, XIX to Maurits and the High and Secret Council, April 18 1642. '*maer U Ex.cie mits desen expresselijck en seer gedienssel. versoecken en bidden in het voorn. Gouvernemet voor den tijt van een jaer te willen continueeren (als wanneer de meergenoemde dismissie U Ex.cie van nu aff toestaen)*'.

Johan Maurits really did wish to leave.<sup>462</sup> In writing about the Mauritshuis, Evelyn de Regt, too, expresses the opinion that Johan Maurits longed to return to the Netherlands in 1642,<sup>463</sup> referring to his correspondence with Constantijn Huygens. This included a letter of May 9, 1642, which Johan Maurits finished with the following (in somewhat broken French): ‘*Also, I hope to have the honor of seeing you again soon, as my contracted period here will soon expire, to my great contentment. At Antonio Vaz, the May 9, 1642.*’<sup>464</sup> This would seem to suggest that Johan Maurits genuinely wanted to leave Brazil even before he could have known about the decision taken by the XIX a month earlier. Seen in this light, his leaving of Brazil fits into an unbroken career path, and his dismissal cannot be seen as the result of the directors’ negative perceptions of his performance.

However, there are a number of arguments that mitigate against seeing this as an open-and-shut case. In the first place, Johan Maurits was not in a better financial position when he returned to the Netherlands in 1644 than when he had left some eight years earlier. He had spent a great deal of money on his palaces in Brazil, and building the *Mauritshuis* in The Hague had cost him a fortune. Additionally, the rank in which he was re-accepted into the army – colonel – was lower both in terms of remuneration and stature than the position he had held in Brazil. Although he had negotiated that he could return to his former rank and position in the army, it is likely – in light of his attempts to become marshal of the cavalry upon his return – that Johan Maurits thought the rank of colonel was now beneath his dignity, given that he had commanded much larger forces in Brazil. It is no coincidence, therefore, that he immediately tried to be appointed to a higher rank in the army. Seen in this light, his dismissal from Brazil was a painful step backwards in income and stature, and one which he was not well equipped to deal with. This might have lessened over time as he was subsequently able to use his Brazilian collection to acquire new titles, while the WIC’s position worsened catastrophically over the second half of the 1640s. Willem Frederik, the Frisian stadholder whose diary constitutes such an important source of information, noted on September 9, 1643 that *overste* (military rank) Kijn had told him that he was of the opinion that Johan Maurits would try and stay in Brazil for another three years or so, as he would be financially ruined if he returned earlier.<sup>465</sup>

So if the dismissal is not as straightforward as it seems, how should we understand it? The lack of interest in this part of Johan Maurits’ career is puzzling, as is the lack of attention for his performance as a military commander. This, too, seems a result of a historiography that has been heavily dominated by art historians. This chapter will try, therefore, to settle the question of Johan Maurits’ departure from Brazil. To do so, I will focus on the dismissal itself, and the increasing tensions between the directors and governor-general in the period 1640-1644. Although Johan Maurits had requested to be allowed to return before, these requests had not been granted.<sup>466</sup> In the case of Artichewsky he had also used the threat of resignation to force the removal of the unwelcome colonel.<sup>467</sup> The question, therefore, is whether this was merely a

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<sup>462</sup> Boxer, *The Dutch in Brazil*, 154. S. Groenveld, ‘Die wil was goet, maer die macht te Kleijn: Brazilië in de Nederlandse Archieven van Oranje en Nassau’, in: M. Wiesenbron (ed.), *Brazilië in de Nederlandse Archieven (1624-1654): Documenten in het Koninklijk Huisarchief en in het Archief van de Staten-Generaal* (CNWS, Leiden 2008), 72-111, 102-14.

<sup>463</sup> Evelyn de Regt, *Mauritshuis* (Staatsuitgeverij, The Hague 1987) 21.

<sup>464</sup> Correspondence of Constantijn Huygens, part 3, 283-284. ‘*Aussi j’espere d’avoir l’honneur de vous revoir bientost, car mon temps s’en va finir à mon grand contentement. Dieu veuille que je puisse avoir l’honneur de vous veoir en vostre belle maison, comme estant Antonivaz, ce 9 de May 1642.*’

<sup>465</sup> *Gloria Parendi*, diary 1643, p. 21.

<sup>466</sup> Barlaeus, *Rerum per Octennium*, 310.

<sup>467</sup> See chapter 4.

standard negotiating tactic, intended to put pressure on the XIX, and which backfired, or whether remaining in Brazil was in fact agreeable to Johan Maurits. The answer to this question must be sought in the changing relations between the company in the Netherlands, its governor-general in Brazil, and the Generality. The position of the governor-general and the High and Secret Council of Brazil was dependent on relations with both the Generality (including the stadholder) and the directors of the company. The directors, in turn, were increasingly reliant on support from the Generality in the form of money, men and ships, and this made control of information coming from Brazil of the greatest importance. Getting provinces to pay extraordinary subsidies was difficult at the best of times, but unfiltered information coming from Brazil could further problematize this political process. This is why the directors were displeased with Johan Maurits' direct correspondence with the Generality. For the High and Secret Council and the governor-general, however, direct contacts with the Generality were of great importance as they could provide a tool to force the directors to take action. This issue became increasingly critical as the WIC became ever more unable to effect decisions in the XIX and enforce them.

Something went amiss in the relations between the three sides in this equation during the period under review, leading to the dismissal of Johan Maurits in 1642. To find out exactly what went wrong, this chapter will look at the dismissal process in reverse order and so starting with the imposition of a new governmental structure on the colony after the departure of Johan Maurits. This new organization and the convoluted process of finding a successor for Johan Maurits were studied in detail in Alexander Bick's excellent PhD dissertation.<sup>468</sup> For our purposes, it is important to note that the dismissal of Johan Maurits resulted not merely in his replacement, but in a complete overhaul of the governmental structure. In both the letter of dismissal of April 18, 1642 and in the regulations for the new administration of Brazil after Johan Maurits' departure, the XIX highlighted all the areas of contention between them and their governor-general. These documents will thus serve as the starting point for the analysis by allowing me to zoom in on the specific points of contention without getting bogged down in a descriptive study of 'Dutch Brazil' in general. First, however, I will discuss the composition of the XIX in the early 1640s compared with the summer of 1636, when Johan Maurits was appointed, and the changing place of the WIC within the Dutch Republic.

### **Company and state in the Netherlands: between business and politics**

The position of the WIC continued to deteriorate, both commercially and politically, throughout the later 1630s and 1640s. But this slide in power was not at all predestined or obvious to contemporaries. The company's poor financial position could still be masked by some great military victories, which held out the possibility of its being restored to profitability by force of arms. The year 1639, for example, saw not only WIC naval successes in Brazilian waters, but also a significant WIC contingent participating in the Battle of the Downs. Two of the largest ships in the combined Dutch fleet of nearly a hundred ships were from the WIC: the *Salamander* and the *Jupiter*, both of 40 guns, while there was also the *St. Laurens* of 32 guns.<sup>469</sup> Ironically, the only ship lost in the battle in the Channel on September 15, the opening battle in the Downs campaign, was the hired WIC-ship *Groot Christoffel*, the former flagship of Christoffel

<sup>468</sup> A. Bick, *Governing the Free Seas*, 131-167.

<sup>469</sup> J. Bender, *Dutch warships in the age of sail, 1600-1714: Design, Construction, Careers and Fates* (Seaforth Publishing, Barnsley 2014) 50-55.

Artichewsky. This ship blew up, probably after its own gunpowder stores were accidentally ignited.<sup>470</sup>

The Portuguese revolt in 1640 and the WIC's concomitant conquests of Angola and Maranhão again offered the prospect of profitability. Although the directors were aware of the worsening position of the WIC, it was not until the second half of the 1640s that this became known to a more general public. The WIC had not made a profit or issued any dividends since the capture of the 'silver fleet' at Matanzas in 1628. The mounting pressure of operating a costly, dangerous and loss-making colonial enterprise in Brazil put increasing pressure on the WIC directors from the late 1630s onwards. Increasingly, amity between the chambers broke down and the chambers faced off against one another in attempts to direct the few profitable trades to their own chamber. This would ultimately lead to affairs such as the fight over the division of gold from the Gold Coast in 1648, when the chamber of De Maze accused Amsterdam of not sharing the gold among the chambers, while Amsterdam claimed it did not need to do so as this trade had been conducted by Amsterdam. We only know about this case because the disagreement got out of hand and the directors of the two chambers turned to the States-General to enforce their claims.<sup>471</sup> Though this particular case falls outside this chapter's period of interest, it shows what the trajectory that the WIC was on would ultimately lead to. Increasingly, the WIC had to turn to the Generality for subsidies to enable it to continue the war in Brazil. However, this meant that the WIC directors had to become involved in the political discussions on war and peace being conducted within the Dutch Republic.

By the early 1640s, Dutch domestic politics was entering what would prove to be a tumultuous period of strife and discord, and that even outlasted the signing of the Peace of Munster in 1648. Although there were several strands of debate, the most important one related to the war effort against Spain. The military accomplishments of the Republic's army in the second half of the 1630s were less impressive than before, with the capture of Breda in 1637 being the main achievement. The Spanish army of Flanders presented an ever smaller risk to the Republic, while the Catalan Revolt and the Portuguese Restoration, both in 1640, had further undermined Spain's ability to threaten the Dutch Republic.<sup>472</sup> These changing relations caused deep tensions within the Dutch political system. Whereas stadholder Frederik Hendrik had been in favor of a ceasefire or peace with Spain in the first half of his reign, the Franco-Dutch offensive and defensive alliance of 1635 had changed his views. With French support, further conquests in the south were again possible.<sup>473</sup> But continuation of the war was deeply harmful to the interests of the merchants of Holland, who faced ever higher losses of ships to the privateers of Dunkirk, with 495 ships being lost between 1642 and 1646.<sup>474</sup> This put pressure on the political coalition that had effectively ruled the Netherlands in the 1630s, had managed the war effort and the WIC, and had supported the appointment of Johan Maurits.

By the early 1640s a rift had appeared between the interests and proposed strategies of the pro-war factions around the stadholder on the one hand, and the peace-minded factions of the merchant communities in Holland on the other hand. With Spain no longer an existential threat to the core provinces of the Republic itself, the cities of Holland were ever less inclined to

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<sup>470</sup> Bender, *Dutch warships in the age of sail, 1600-1714*, 170.

<sup>471</sup> NL-HaNA, States-General, 1.0.1.02, inv. no. 12564.23, pieces 1-9.

<sup>472</sup> Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 539.

<sup>473</sup> Van Nimwegen, *Deser Landen Crijchsvolk*, 204-213.

<sup>474</sup> Bruijn, *The Dutch Navy of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, 27.

dedicate funds to maintaining a large field army for use in offensive operations. A quick peace was in the cities' interests, while the stadholder still wished to crown his career by capturing Antwerp.<sup>475</sup> Holland itself was less inclined than ever to conquer the southern provinces as that would mean the possible admission of Brabant and Flanders into the Generality as voting members, thereby diluting Holland's strong position. Chapter four argued that the appointment of Johan Maurits to the governor-generalship of Brazil can be seen as a favor granted by the influential Amsterdam regent Albert Coenraetsz. Burgh to stadholder Frederik Hendrik. And it was precisely this coalition between Amsterdam and the stadholder that now began to fray, with immediate and grave repercussions for the WIC. By appointing Johan Maurits in 1636, the directors had chosen to align the company squarely behind a pro-war and Orangist banner. By the early 1640s, however, the WIC directors in Amsterdam, who were not only WIC directors but also regents in the city and actively involved in other branches of trade, were beginning to have second thoughts about this choice. The political crisis that was slowly enveloping the Republic by the early 1640s did not come to a head until 1650, with the attempted *coup d'état* by stadholder William II, the son of Frederik Hendrik. But for the WIC, the consequences of the crisis were immediate and significant. Besides the intra-company disagreements that it engendered, thus further stoking the flames of disagreement between Amsterdam and Zeeland in particular, it also made the WIC a puppet in a larger political game in the Netherlands and, additionally, changed the logic behind the appointment of Johan Maurits. While it had been Amsterdam, in the figure of Coenraetsz. Burgh, who had nominated Johan Maurits in the first place, it was also Amsterdam that now argued most vociferously for his dismissal, as this chapter will make clear.

In order to study the composition of the WIC's board of directors, we first need, however, to exclude the possibility that rival factional interests took over between 1636 and 1642. Frustratingly, it is still rather difficult to precisely chart the changes in the composition of the WIC's management, both at a central (XIX) and cameral level. Alexander Bick's assertion that '*We still know precious little about the way the Heren XIX functioned, the individuals that staffed its meetings, and the policies it developed*' still holds true and is equally or perhaps even more applicable to the chambers.<sup>476</sup> This is not merely a problem of a historiography that has until now tended to ignore these questions; there are also source problems at the heart of this issue. In the case of the Amsterdam chamber, for example, we are well provided with minutes of the meetings for the crucial period of 1635-1636, when it was decided to appoint Johan Maurits (see chapter 4). Unfortunately, the minutes for the years after 1636 have been lost and are only available again from 1668 onwards. In the case of Zeeland, the minutes of the meetings have been better preserved, with only two hiatuses in the years between 1626 and 1674, when the first WIC went bankrupt.<sup>477</sup> Unfortunately, Zeeland kept its minutes differently from Amsterdam as the former's minutes do not start with a list of the directors attending the meetings. This therefore makes it somewhat difficult to reliably reconstruct the composition of the Zeeland chamber, too. The smaller chambers present a varied picture. Stad en Lande is generally very well documented, but of De Maze and the Noorderkwartier we know hardly anything. The following two tables thus focus on those attending the meetings of the XIX, of which it is fortunately possible to reconstruct a better picture. This is still not complete, however, and some caveats need to be

<sup>475</sup> P.J. Blok, *Frederik Hendrik, Prins van Oranje* (Meulenhoff: Amsterdam 1924) 232.

<sup>476</sup> Bick, *Governing the Free Sea*, 96-97.

<sup>477</sup> NL-HaNa, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. nos. 20-32.

made. Firstly, attendance of the XIX meetings could vary from year to year, depending on whom the chambers decided to delegate. Marked changes in the composition of the XIX may not necessarily, therefore, point to any real changes in the chambers. Only a long-term study of all XIX meetings could produce a more comprehensive analysis. However, here, too, we are faced with source problems. The following table (Table 7) presents a picture of attendance at the XIX meetings in 1636, 1642 and 1645.

**Table 7: The XIX in 1636, 1642 and 1645**

Name	1636	1642	1645	Chamber
G. van Arnhem	X	X		States-General
Albert Coenraetsz. Burgh (Conradi)	X	X		Amsterdam
Johan de Laet	X	X	X	Amsterdam / Leiden
Pieter Duvelaer	X			Zeeland
Johan Raijt	X			
Jan van der Marct	X			Amsterdam
Johan Gijsselingh	X			Zeeland
Pieter van de Velde	X			Zeeland
Cornelis Nicolai	X			De Maze
Hogenhoeck	X			Amsterdam
Eduart Man	X			Amsterdam
P. Varlot	X			
Daniel van Liebergen	X			Amsterdam
Adriaen van der Dussen	X			De Maze
P. Ben	X	X		Noorderkwartier
Reynier Reael	X			Amsterdam
Christoffer van Ewsum	X			Stad en Lande
Pieter Evertsz. Hulft	X			Amsterdam
Matthijs van Ceulen	X	X		Amsterdam
Sijmen van der Does		X		
D. Bout		X		
G. de Graeff		X		
Jasper de Maaght		X		
I.V. Harinckhouck		X		Amsterdam
B. Iselingh		X		
P. Bisschop		X		
M. de Vogelaer		X		
Jan Lemand		X		
Elias de Vaet		X		
Thomas Voorwer		X		
Ferdinando Schulenburgh		X	X	Amsterdam



P. Claes Teenijn		X		
Thomas Voorwer		X		
P. Claes Teenijn		X		
I. Vriselaer		X		
Cornelis Witsen		X		
Van de Velde		X		
Jan Louijs			X	Zeeland
Joan Radij			X	Amsterdam
David Baute			X	Zeeland
[Cornelis Dackers, assessor]			X	Assessor, Zeeland
Jeronimus Hersevoor[?]			X	Amsterdam
Alewijn Halewijn			X	De Maze
Nicolaes Tienhove			X	De Maze
Floris Huigh			X	Noorderkwartier
<i>mr.</i> Jacob Hamel			X	Amsterdam
Adriaen van Hecke			X	Zeeland
<i>Absent</i>			X	Stad en Lande
Johan Lethoor			X	Amsterdam
[Adriaen van Eede, assessor]			X	Assessor, Amsterdam
Nicolaes van der Marckt			X	Zeeland
Isaacq van Beek			X	Amsterdam
Jacob Velthuijse			X	De Maze
Bonaventura Broen			X	Amsterdam
Claes ... Dolphijn			X	Noorderkwartier
Thobias Iddekinge			X	Stad en Lande
Johan van Halewijn			X	Amsterdam

Source: NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, OWIC, inv. no. 2. 'X' denotes attendance of meetings.

Given the way the XIX were nominated, some variation in the composition of the board over time is to be expected. But there is still some interesting continuity over the years, especially between 1636 and 1642, and specifically in the persons of Johan de Laet, Albert Coenraetsz. Burgh and P. Ben. Crucially, all three of these men were on the committee that had negotiated the contract with Johan Maurits back in 1636. In addition, the delegate from the States-General also remained the same over these years. Although the contrast between 1642 and 1645 is more marked, we also see here the names of some individuals who were also present nearly ten years earlier. All in all, this makes it unlikely that sudden changes in the factional balance in the chambers or the XIX caused a reversal of earlier policy. Especially the attendance by Coenraetsz. Burgh, Johan de Laet and P. Ben in both 1636 and 1642 is important. These men played important roles within the company, while Burgh, for example, was also actively involved in the negotiations with Hendrik Brouwer in 1642, which will be addressed in more detail later in this

chapter.<sup>478</sup> The conflict with Johan Maurits thus cannot be adequately explained by referring to changes in the composition of the WIC's central board of directors. Rather, it seems that circumstances, of which the previously noted political crisis in the Republic was one, must have changed the relationship between the directors and their governor-general.

### **From dismissal to a new government: identifying the points of contention between Johan Maurits and the directors**

The XIX provisionally dismissed Johan Maurits from his position in Brazil on April 18, 1642, although he was requested to remain in office for another year before returning. A little over a year and a half later, the XIX settled on a new administrative model for Brazil.<sup>479</sup> Together, the two documents evidencing these events identify the points of contention between the XIX and their governor from the perspective of the XIX. For Johan Maurits' perspective, I will turn to the speech delivered to the States-General by his private secretary, Karel Tolner, in June 1642.<sup>480</sup> This document shows the points at which Johan Maurits, in his turn, criticized the performance of his employees. Together, the viewpoints of the XIX and Johan Maurits will allow me to identify the issues on which the two parties disagreed, and thus reconstruct the changes in the networks that had previously appointed Johan Maurits.

All the points of contention between the directors and the Brazilian government of Johan Maurits are addressed in the dismissal letter itself and in the papers handed to the States-General in July 1642 by Karel Tolner. The documents of April 18 (the actual dismissal letter was the second one sent that day) addressed a number of points: the separation of Angola from Brazil that had been debated that winter and spring, the reduction of troop numbers made possible (or so the directors thought) by the ceasefire with Portugal, and the issue of *mesnagie* (the need to economize in Brazil by cutting costs). This issue was taken up in the directors' stipulation that they were willing to grant Johan Maurits' request to be relieved if he stayed another year. During this year, however, the eleventh article of his contract was to be cancelled. Instead of a 'free table', which, as I argued earlier, was of great importance to Johan Maurits' position as a patron in Brazil, he would receive one thousand guilders a month, far less than the actual costs of feeding and maintaining his household, which ran at over nine thousand guilders a month.<sup>481</sup> This was, of course, deeply humiliating to Johan Maurits. By keeping him in office, but reducing the allowance for his court, the directors would force him to admit to his followers that he could no longer maintain them, thus reducing his stature and patronage. This was crucial: the 'free table' had allowed Johan Maurits to construct a court in Brazil and bind WIC officials, high Portuguese citizens and Dutch colonists together in a clientage. Taking away the dinner privileges thus meant the dissolution of this network, as the directors must have known all too well.

Further hints of tensions between the XIX and Johan Maurits are provided in the documents detailing the design for the new government of Brazil. The new structure would see a council of five voting members and a secretary, headed by a president. This president had a very different position vis-à-vis the council from that of Johan Maurits, with the former being more a

<sup>478</sup> NL-HaNA, Aanwinsten 1<sup>e</sup> afdeling ARA, 1.11.01.01, inv. no. 1359, copy of resolutions by *Heren XIX*. Burgh was involved, along with Van de Velde, De Graeff, De Vogelaer and Iselingsh.

<sup>479</sup> NL-HaNA, States-General, 1.01.02, inv. no. 12564.17, no. 5. Extract from the register of the *Heren XIX* – the new administrative model of the colony is accepted.

<sup>480</sup> NL-HaNA, States-General, 1.01.02, inv. no. 5756, Tolner, 15 June, lectum 17 June. Thanks to Joris van den Tol for pointing this source out to me.

<sup>481</sup> See chapter 4.

member of equal status presiding over the meetings, rather than an individual of inherently different rank and stature. Unlike Johan Maurits, the new president of what was to be styled the 'High Government of Brazil' did not have a double vote, while newly reinforced councils of justice and accounts would provide more checks and balances on the High Government. This was in direct response to earlier complaints by the accounting office in Brazil against the High and Secret Council. These points – Angola, cost reduction (*mesnagerie*) and the position of the accounting office – will be explored in more detail later on in this chapter. First, however, I will examine the mission of Johan Maurits' private secretary to the States-General in summer 1642.

#### *Karel Tolner's mission*

That a sense of unhappiness with the existing situation was not felt only by the company directors is demonstrated by the mission of Karel Tolner to the States-General in July 1642. Tolner was the private secretary of Johan Maurits, and when the latter's request to return to the Netherlands to present a report on the situation in Brazil was turned down in 1640 and again in 1641, Tolner was sent to present Johan Maurits' ideas to the States-General. The fact that Tolner went to the States-General instead of to the XI is in itself already an extremely significant point. Indeed, in the document presented by Tolner, Johan Maurits argued that the most pressing matter for 'the conquest of Brazil' was a reform of its government. According to Johan Maurits, the directors did not have the experience or expertise needed to rule such a large colony and once they had gained such experience, they were replaced by others who '*did not know what the previous ones had decided upon.*'<sup>482</sup> Although the document does not spell out what the new government of Brazil should be, we can hypothesize that the particularly blunt criticism of the XIX, and the forum where this criticism was aired – a meeting of the States-General – could mean only one thing: Johan Maurits was pressing for management of the colony to be taken on by the Generality instead of the company. This was admittedly a radical idea. However, this interpretation is supported by other arguments against the directors given in the document. Johan Maurits argued that they had not kept their word when it came to providing supplies and had not realized that the conquest of Maranhão, Angola and São Tomé would only anger the Portuguese more. Furthermore, Johan Maurits presciently argued that the Portuguese rebellion against their Habsburg king only made rebellion in Brazil all the more likely, and that this made reducing the number of troops in Brazil at this juncture particularly unwise. What is more, the XIX's reticence to appoint new officers made it unattractive for good men to remain in the company's service. All in all, the XIX were not up to the task of managing the company at best, and at worst had been downright dishonest with the Brazilian government. Johan Maurits pointed out the increasing difficulties faced by the WIC in the Netherland in making decisions. On top of all that, '*the XIX do only rarely convene, and often take a recess, so that the proper occasions and seasons often pass, which are not easily reversed, and a state, so far distant as the state of Brazil, can lightly be put to risk.*'<sup>483</sup> If and when these premonitions came to pass, Johan Maurits wished to make clear that no blame could be attached to him.

By the summer of 1642, therefore, the directors of the company and Johan Maurits had all had enough of one another. The remainder of this chapter will examine the points of

<sup>482</sup> NL-HaNA, States-General, 1.01.02, inv. no. 5756, Tolner, lectum 17 July.

<sup>483</sup> Ibidem. Dutch original: 'Daerenboven soo comen de Heeren XIX selten bij een, en scheiden dickwils op Recess, waerdoor de goete occasien, ende sesoenen menichmael voorbij gaen, die niet wederom herroepen konnen worden, ende lichtelijck een staet, soo verre afgelegen, als de staet van Brasil is, in perickel kan gestelt worden?'

contention between the two parties as expressed in the XIX's dismissal letter of April 18, 1642, and in Johan Maurits' letter presented by Tolner to the States-General in July 1642. These issues concerned the supply situation in Brazil, which both sides blamed on each other; the use of funds in Brazil for what the XIX deemed improper purposes; the status of the new, post-1641 conquests and especially Angola; and the proper use of military means in the new post-Portuguese rebellion situation. Before considering each of these aspects in turn, I will examine the changes in the High and Secret Council of Brazil chaired by Johan Maurits, given that this body had changed considerably since the latter had taken up the reins of government in 1636.

### **The High and Secret Council of Brazil**

When Johan Maurits left for Brazil in the fall of 1636, he was accompanied by three directors of the WIC as councilors: Johan Gijsselingh (Zeeland chamber), Matthijs van Ceulen (Amsterdam chamber) and Adriaen van der Dussen (De Maze chamber). In chapter four I argued that this 'heavy' council, consisting as it did of WIC directors, was intended both to support Johan Maurits and to act as a check on his considerable prerogatives. How did this work in practice? In 1639, when the 'Artichewsky case' had to be resolved, three councilors were still in place. Over the next year and a half, however, all of them left for the Netherlands and were replaced by three new men. The names of these three new councilors first appear together in a letter to the XIX on January 6, 1641, signaling that, by this date at the latest, the composition of the council had changed. In March of that year, the new councilors' contracts were discussed in the meeting of the XIX.<sup>484</sup> The Brazilian administration under Johan Maurits had no say in the selection of new councilors: Hendrik Hamel, Dirck Codde van den Burgh and Adriaan (also: Adriaen) van Bullestrate. What does the background of these new appointees reveal of the relations between XIX and the government in Brazil? Of the first, not much is known, but given that *mr.* Jacob Hamel sat on the XIX on behalf of the Amsterdam chamber in 1645, it is reasonable to assume that Hendrik, too, came from Amsterdam. Codde van den Burgh meanwhile had been sworn in as a *secretaris* of the city of Enkhuizen in November 1636.<sup>485</sup> Adriaan van Bullestrate, however, is more of an enigma. Boxer states him to be a former master carpenter in Middelburg, but without giving references for this.<sup>486</sup> The regional archives in 's-Hertogenbosch contain a document, dated September 13, 1639, in which Adriaan van Bullestrate is referred to as council and treasurer of the city of Middelburg.<sup>487</sup>

These councilors took over the reins of governing Brazil by themselves after Johan Maurits' departure, in anticipation of the new administrative model to be imposed by the WIC directors. The new model, however, was years in the making, and this council (without Dirck Codde van den Burgh, who died in 1644 and was replaced by Pieter Bas) remained in charge of Brazil during the early years of the Portuguese revolt.<sup>488</sup> Although Boxer rightly argued that the council was not lacking in experience, he did not mention that its members had already been in office for three years by the time Johan Maurits left. Additionally, the new councilors were closely connected to three of the chambers: Amsterdam, Zeeland and De Maze. This indicates a clear

<sup>484</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01 inv. no. 2. Extract from the secret resolutions of the XIX, March 30, 1640.

<sup>485</sup> E. den Hoof, *Historie der vermaerde zee- en koop-stadt enkhuisen, vervaetende haere herkomst, en voortgangh. Mitsgaders Verscheide gedenkwaardige geschiedenissen, aldaer voorgevallen* (Egbert den Hoof, Enkhuizen 1666) 85.

<sup>486</sup> Boxer, *The Dutch in Brazil*, 164.

<sup>487</sup> Brabants Historisch Informatie Centrum (BHIC) 221 Charters Provinciaal Genootschap van K & W, 1303-1845, inv. no. 587.

<sup>488</sup> *Ibidem*, and Bick, *Governing the Free Seas*, 144.

continuation of the policy, going back to the early 1630s, of tying colonial administration closely to the chambers. However, the new High and Secret Council posed persistent problems for the XIX. These problems seemed to center on one of their members, Adriaan van Bullestrate, who, from 1642 onwards, was at the heart of an increasing number of disputes between the High and Secret Council and the lower administrative staff of the company in Brazil. He was accused, for example, of selling company stores for his own account and of letting his protégés also do so, while the auction master in Recife accused him of thwarting the regular auction. Jacob van Luitsenich, who had been in charge of supplies of building materials in Recife, accused Van Bullestrate of forcing him to give up his position so that Van Bullestrate's favorite, the *fabriek* Michiel Pietersen, would have a free hand.<sup>489</sup> But that was not all: Henricus Torquinius, the head of the *raad van financiën* (also called: *rekenkamer*), the accounting office of Brazil, accused the entire High and Secret Council of stealing from the company and of hampering him in his efforts to root out corruption.<sup>490</sup> The accounting office later argued that it was entitled to send its own deputation to the XIX in order to argue its case there.<sup>491</sup> Nor was it only the WIC's employees who complained. The creditors of the merchant Cardin Estien, who had fled Recife, complained that Van Bullestrate had unlawfully claimed the merchant's estate.<sup>492</sup> Although the formal complaint, drawn up in May or June 1643, was directed at the High and Secret Council as a whole, the earlier depositions in the case referred only to the figure of Adriaan van Bullestrate.<sup>493</sup> He was likely to have been involved because Joost van Bullestrate, probably his son, had been a business partner of Cardin Estien.<sup>494</sup>

These complaints all reached the XIX and were often intentionally phrased bluntly, such as the complaint by Henricus Torquinius, of the accounting office, who wrote to the XIX '*with a letter full of complaints on the State, our board and me personally in particular... But no, as soft barbers make for festering wounds, so do those who try to hide the disasters in a state under a cloak of flattery...*'.<sup>495</sup> The High and Secret Council rallied around Van Bullestrate and refuted all allegations. It is interesting to note that though the complaints were directed at Van Bullestrate, the council as a whole stuck together in their refutations, thus indicating that Van Bullestrate enjoyed strong support from the other members of the council, including Johan Maurits. Their response was strikingly similar to the response of the (differently composed) council in the Artichewsky case; the complaints were all described as 'painted lies' and 'the result of jealousy'.<sup>496</sup> Torquinius himself, it must be noted, was not exactly a paragon of virtue as he was later charged with having an affair with the wife of the engineer Pieter van Strucht.<sup>497</sup>

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<sup>489</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 58, no. 95.

<sup>490</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 58. Torquinius to the XIX, August 30, 1643.

<sup>491</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 58, no. 59.

<sup>492</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 58, deeds of attestation April 28, 1643 and May 11, 1643.

<sup>493</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 58, nos. 8 and 13.

<sup>494</sup> In April 1642, a Joost van Bullestrate requested the Zeeland chamber to pay out seven months of his father. Joost van Bullestrate is recorded as having bought a number of slaves from Estien early in 1643, giving him ample time to sail to Brazil in the meantime.

<sup>495</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 58, no. 94, complaints by Henricus Torquinius, August 1643. '*maer neen, gelijk sachte Barbiers stinckende wonden maecten, soo doen die gene mede die met den deckmantel van moij-weer, de rampen in een staet willen versussen.*'

<sup>496</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 58, no. 45 (unfoliated).

<sup>497</sup> Interestingly, this case was ultimately prosecuted in the Noorderkwartier and the files ended up in the archives of the States-General, which is why the case does not appear in the WIC sources: NL-HaNA, States-General, 1.01.01, inv. no. 12551.120A, *Stukken betreffende de bemoeiingen van de Staten-Generaal met het proces voor de Raad van Justitie in Brazilië*

Regardless of the High and Secret Council's elaborate refutations, the XIX cannot have failed to gain the impression that the administration of their most important colony was collapsing under the burden of internal infighting. Though no complaints – at this stage – were directed against Johan Maurits personally, this process was taking place under his watch. The poor performance of the members of the High and Secret Council reflected poorly on Johan Maurits himself. Indeed the governor-general himself was implicated in some cases, including in the minor scandal surrounding the private use of WIC building materials by members of the High and Secret Council.

Jacob Luitsenich had accused Van Bullestrate of absconding with building materials for resale. In addition, the council had been accused in an anonymous letter of September 1642 of neglecting the fortifications in preference for the members' own houses. The council retorted that it would indeed have been better to reconstruct the fortifications around Recife in brick, rather than earth. Brick fortifications had the advantage that they required less maintenance, while earthworks generally needed to be reconstructed every year. Brickwork, however, was more costly and required the consent of the XIX. Regardless of these considerations, the council argued that the required bricks were simply not available.<sup>498</sup> However, a list made at the end of June 1643 provides clear details of the bricks used between July 1642 and the end of June 1643,<sup>499</sup> with Table 8 providing a simplified overview of the bricks used during this one-year period.

**Table 8: Use of bricks in Brazil, 1642-1643**

Destination	Number of bricks
Lodging of minor company officials	57.200
Fortifications	4.150
Kitchens aboard nine ships	16.000
'Delivered to his Excellency' (Johan Maurits)	69.000
New house of Codde van den Burgh	14.000
<b>House of <i>mijn heer</i> van Bullestrate</b>	10.000
<b>House of <i>mijn heer</i> Hamel</b>	12.000
Company buildings in Recife (two houses, prison, anchor smithy)	26.200
Sent to Guinea	6.000
Other	4.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>218.350</b>

Source: NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 58, fol. 34, *Notitie van steenen soo moppen als clinquerts soo ten dienste vande Comp. door de metselaers sijn verbruycet t sedert 2 Julij 1642 tot ultimo Junij 1643*

The high use of bricks by the members of the High and Secret Council is immediately striking. Of the total of 218,350 bricks used, no fewer than 113,000 bricks, or nearly 52 per cent, were used by the governor-general and the three members of the council. The low use of bricks in the fortifications is immediately striking and reflects the fact that most WIC fortifications were made of earth and sod with wooden palisades, rather than brick-built. The most important exception to

*tussen de advocaat-fiscaal ratione officii, en Henricus Caspari Torquinius, gewezen militair-fiscaal, over een oneerbare verhouding tussen laatstgenoemde en de vrouw van ingenieur Pieter van Strucht., 1652.*

<sup>498</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 58 no. 45.

<sup>499</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 58 fol. 34, *Notitie van steenen soo moppen als clinquerts soo ten dienst vande Comp. door de metselaers sijn verbruycet t sedert 2 julij tot ultimo Junij 1643.*

this rule was perhaps Fort Ceulen, which was a Portuguese construction. The tabulated information shows that the council's claim that there were no bricks was not entirely true; rather, it was a question of priorities. Apparently, the private residences were deemed more important than the fortifications.

This contention about the supply of building materials and logistics was only worsened by the dispute that arose over the construction of a bridge linking Recife to Mauritsstad. This bridge is often presented, along with the palaces of Vrijburg and Boa Vista, as well as the urban design of Mauritsstad, as an example of the enlightened nature of Johan Maurits' rule in Brazil.<sup>500</sup> It is portrayed as unambiguously positive, and the directors' balking at the costs of construction is seen as yet another example of their penny-wise, pound-foolish attitude to colonial governance. The bridge (see Figure 19) was certainly important in that it created opportunities to further develop the built-up area of Mauritsstad, on the island of Antonio Vaz. This area, where Johan Maurits also built his most important palace, Boa Vista, with gardens and a zoo, was to be the future heart of the city. Its urban design has attracted much attention and has been attributed to Pieter Post himself.<sup>501</sup> It must be remembered, however, that at the time Frans Post made his panorama etching of Recife-Mauritsstad, the latter had still scarcely been built, while Recife is represented as a concentrated beehive of dwellings.<sup>502</sup> The plan of the town so beautifully represented in Figure 16 does not, therefore, indicate the actual but rather the ideal situation, with red color denoting the future built-up city blocks. To attain this ideal, the bridge, linking the new part of town to the old part with the port and warehouses, was crucial. To the company directors in the Netherlands, things must have appeared quite differently, however. Constructing a bridge would primarily benefit the city's population, rather than the company. Taking a generous view, it might have been argued that what benefited the population of the colony was also in the company's best interests. But the WIC could not afford to take such a generous view of colonial governance. With the slide in profitability came a natural reluctance to pay for projects such as these.

Johan Maurits had initially kept this well in mind, arguing that the costs of building the bridge would be raised by a tax on the citizens, who, it was argued, were eager to have it. By October 1642, however, it had become apparent that this eagerness for a bridge did not translate into an eagerness to pay for it. The XIX thus wrote on October 12 of that year:

*Already we hear of the unrest among the inhabitants upon the expiration of the first year [of the levy], as far as we are concerned, we do not accept the use of the Company's means to complete this bridge.*<sup>503</sup>

This sheds a somewhat different light on the XIX's reaction to Johan Maurits' building projects from that presented by Wätjen. The latter put the costs of the bridge at 128.000 guilders, which were 'advanced by the generous governor' without the XIX chipping in at all.<sup>504</sup> But the XIX had

<sup>500</sup> Van Oers, *Dutch Town Planning*, 138-151.

<sup>501</sup> Terwen, 'The Buildings of Johan Maurits van Nassau', 87-88.

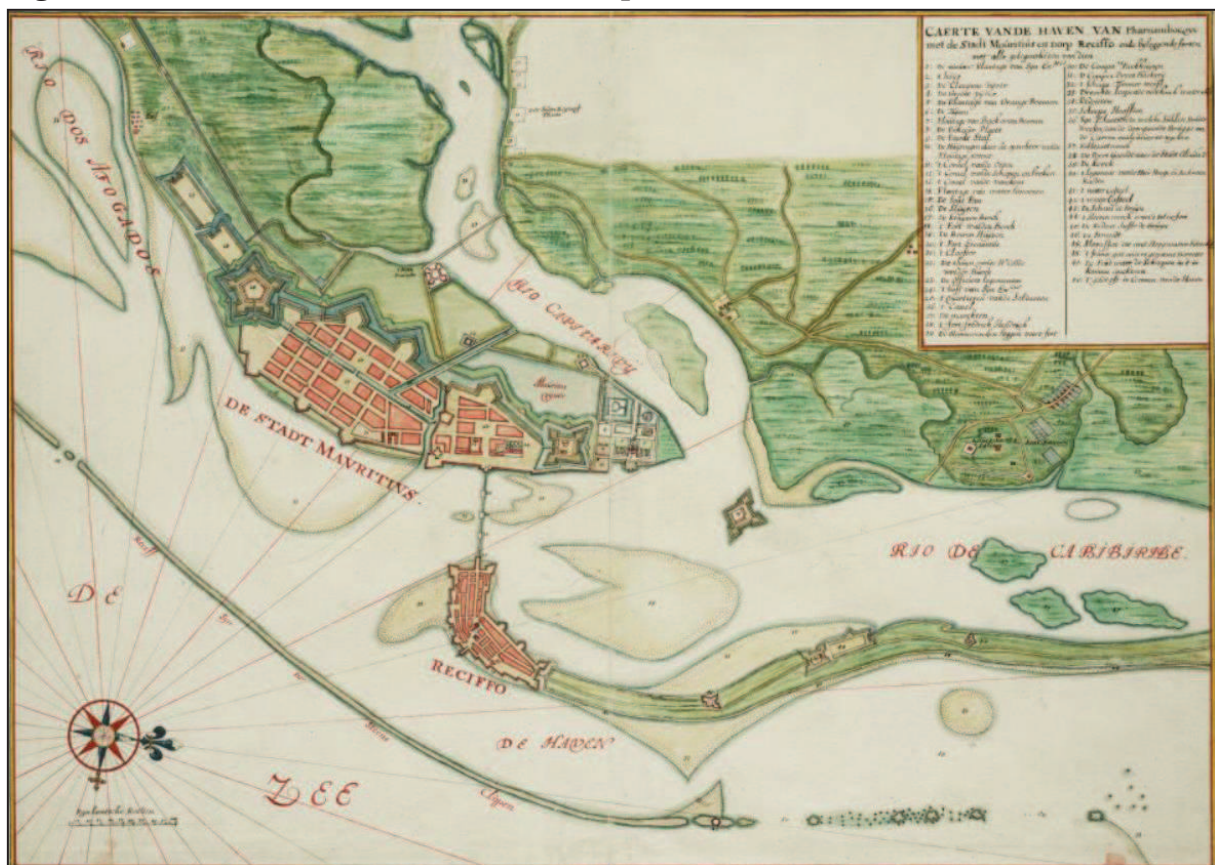
<sup>502</sup> Barlaeus, *Rerum per Octennium*, after page 146.

<sup>503</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01 inv. no. 9, fol. 69. '*Wij vernemen alreede de onlusten die op het expireren van het eerste Jaer bij de voors. ingesetenen gethoont werden, wat ons belangt, wij en verstaen geesints dat de middelen vande Comp.ie tot het volvoeren vande voors. brugge sullen werden aangenent.*'

<sup>504</sup> Wätjen, *Das Niederländisches Kolonialreich*, 125. He cites NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01 inv. no. 55. Letter of the governor-general and council to the XIX to make this point, but nowhere is it mentioned that Johan Maurits would forward the costs. Instead, a levy in Recife and Pernambuco was intended to cover the costs.

made it clear from the outset that the company would not pay for this venture. The directors' resentment of this project was due not only to its high costs, but also because they had only consented to construction on the condition that the local population would pay for it. Instead, the costs were ultimately borne by the company. That this was the result of the policies of an otherwise free-spending nobleman who did not deign to speak to his financial council can only have increased the directors' displeasure. Barleaus in his panegyric on Johan Maurits spends no less than four whole pages on the bridge-building episode.<sup>505</sup> These pages offer an interesting insight into the motivations that Johan Maurits would offer of why the bridge was necessary, but also reveal how the bridge became a symbol of his power. Barleaus mentions economic and military reasons for the bridge. The bridge would open up Ant3nio Vaz for expansion of the city of Recife, allowing for more and cheaper housing. In addition, the bridge would allow safe transport of sugar across the treacherous river towards the company's warehouses and the ships at anchor. In the third place, the bridge would allow quick movement of troops in case of attack.<sup>506</sup>

Figure 19: The Recife-Mauritsstad urban complex



Source: NL-HaNA, 4.VELH, Collectie Leupe supplement, inv. no. 0619.74

The elaborate defense of the project, coupled with comparisons to the Roman bridges across the Rhine, S4one and Danube, show that Johan Maurits considered it an important part of his legacy. The symbolic importance of the bridge is supported by the description of what followed. The architect in charge of the project feared that it would not be possible to complete the bridge due

<sup>505</sup> In the Dutch translation of Honor4-Naber at least, see: Barleaus and Honor4-Nabar

<sup>506</sup> S.P. Honor4 Naber and Caspar Barleaus, *Nederlandsch Brazili4 onder het beind van Johan Maurits, Grave van Nassau 1637-1644* (Martinus Nijhoff: The Hague 1923) 205-209.



to the treacherous current and the depth of the river. This was of course a great blow to the prestige of those who had supported it, chief of whom was Johan Maurits.

*‘Thus it seemed that the complaints by those who were accustomed to private calculations of gain, and were used to judge affairs that concern government and are useful for that task, on the same grounds, were justified - not knowing that Rulers to whom great tasks of governance are entrusted to their honor and fame lead another life. Maurits, judging that his honor was at stake if he was seen to have undertaken a project that could not be brought to fruition and that it would show weak governance if he were to forsake the interests of state through the despair of one man [the architect], took up the project himself...’<sup>507</sup>*

The bridge, therefore, had become a symbol of Johan Maurits’ power and needed to be completed at all costs as it would diminish his reputation and honor if it was left uncompleted. It seems symptomatic of a peculiar planning process, however, that the architect in charge only voiced his concerns once the project was already well under way. By 1642, therefore, there were ample grounds for the XIX to wish their governor gone, with Johan Maurits himself offering them a pretext in the shape of his repeated offers to resign. The bridge is thus illustrative of the tensions brought about by Johan Maurits’ investment into the symbols of power and proper governance (infrastructure) for which the company was ultimately liable but which it did not wish to finance.

### **Angola and Chile: increasing the sway of the South Atlantic empire**

The Portuguese revolt against Habsburg dominance, which resulted in the rebellion of 1640, created both challenges and new opportunities for the WIC. On the one hand, a natural outcome would be a ceasefire with Portugal as the latter, too, was now fighting Habsburg Spain. On the other hand, the upheavals in Iberia also offered the opportunity for quick gains at Portugal’s expense. This latter route was chosen and, in quick succession, the WIC captured Maranhão in the north-west, as well as São Tomé and Luanda (Angola) on the other side of the Atlantic. By mid-1641, the WIC’s South Atlantic empire was at its height. Though the seizure of these Portuguese colonies was perhaps technically legal, given that no Luso-Dutch peace treaty had yet been signed and ratified, it shows perhaps a certain short-sightedness in the WIC, both among the directors who ordered the capture, and in Johan Maurits and the Brazilian government who put it into practice.<sup>508</sup>

However, the conquest of Angola, in particular, also created another point of contention between the directors and Johan Maurits: who would rule this territory? Johan Maurits argued, both in letters and through the mission of Tolner, that Angola would be best ruled from Brazil. His arguments made a lot of sense: Angola and Brazil were part of the same system, given that the Brazilian sugar plantations could not function without labor supplied in the form of enslaved Africans shipped from Angola. Although the WIC had conquered Elmina in 1637, this was a

<sup>507</sup> Barlaeus and Honoré-Naber, *Nederlandsch-Brazilië*, 208. ‘*Alzo schenen niet zonder eenigen glimp van recht te klagen zij, die aan particuliere berekeningen gepend, ook gewoon waren zaken die de regering aangingen en uit dat oogpunt nuttig zijn, met denzelfde maatstaf te meten – niet wetende dat Vorsten wien de taak ten deel valt de grootste zaken tot eer en roem te besturen, een ander bestaan leiden. Maurits, van oordeel, dat zijn eer ermede gemoeid was zo hij zich tot iets dat hij niet voltooiën kon had ondervonden, en dat het van zwak beleid zou getuigen het staatsbelang te verwerpen op grond van de wanhoop van een enkelen persoon, heeft de hand aan het werk geslagen...*’

<sup>508</sup> Den Heijer, *De geschiedenis van de WIC*, 76-78.

vastly inferior position from which to enter the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans. Labor from Angola was rated more highly and seen as less likely to rebel. The inclusion of Angola in the Brazilian government would thus further the position of Johan Maurits as governor-general by analogy with the position in the VOC. Shipping could also be more efficiently organized with Recife as a central node. But the directors were fiercely opposed to this idea as the inclusion of Angola in this way would indeed further the stature of the office of governor-general and, by 1642, they were keen to do away with, rather than burnish, this office. The directors argues that in Portuguese times Angola had always remained separate from Brazil and that this should be maintained. Rather than appoint Codde van den Burgh, member of the High and Secret Council as Governor in Angola under supervision from Recife, the directors opted to create an entirely new ‘southern district of Africa’.<sup>509</sup> This conflict, which served to further alienate the directors and governor-general from each other, was mentioned in the letters the directors sent to Johan Maurits in April 1642, and again in the latter’s subsequent protestations to the States-General through the person of Karel Tolner.<sup>510</sup> Angola would remain organizationally separate, though in practice was heavily dependent upon Brazil for resources and manpower.<sup>511</sup>

A year later, however, and on a different front, the directors and the Brazilian government were remarkably still able to cooperate with each other. This was in the matter of Hendrick Brouwer’s 1643 voyage to Chile.<sup>512</sup> By 1641-1642, Portugal’s remaining colonial possessions were out of reach for the WIC, with only Brazil south of the Rio São Francisco remaining part of her South Atlantic empire. Rather surprisingly, given the poor financial situation of the WIC, it was decided to send a fleet to Chile via Brazil with the aim of establishing an alliance with the Araucanian native Americans, exploiting gold and silver mines, and creating a base for operations against Spanish South America and the Manilla galleon. Henk den Heijer argued in his recent publication of the journal of the expedition that it was Johan Maurits who convinced the directors, in 1641, to organize this expedition. This claim was made in reaction to P.J. Bouwman’s assertion that it was Brouwer himself who took the initiative for the expedition.<sup>513</sup> This is interesting as it shows that at that point – August 1641 – the directors were still willing to take these ideas of their governor-general seriously. More puzzling is the way in which the expedition was organized. Hendrik Brouwer, WIC director for the Amsterdam chamber, a former VOC director and former VOC governor-general, was persuaded to take charge of the expedition.<sup>514</sup> However, he sailed from the Republic with only a small fleet of three ships. The idea was to reinforce and resupply his force in Recife and to lift troops from the Brazilian army in order to increase the size of the landing force. But by the time Brouwer’s ships dropped anchor at Recife in December 1642, there had been uprisings in both Maranhão and São Tomé, and the Brazilian government could not release the number of troops or ships needed to give a fair chance of success. Indeed, the expedition ultimately failed completely.<sup>515</sup> It is

<sup>509</sup> K. Ratelband, *Nederlanders in West-Afrika, 1600-1650: Angola, Kongo en São Tomé* (Walburg Pers, Zutphen 2000) 171-172.

<sup>510</sup> NL-HaNA, States-General, 1.01.02., inv. no. 5756, unfoliated. Tolner to the States-General, exhibitum July 15, 1642; lectum July 17, 1642.

<sup>511</sup> C.R. Boxer, *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola: 1602-1686* (The Athlone Press, London 1952) 259-260.

<sup>512</sup> For a recent study of this expedition, see: H.J. den Heijer, *Goud en Indianen: Het Journaal van Hendrick Brouwers expeditie naar Chili in 1643* (Walburg Pers, Zutphen, 2015).

<sup>513</sup> Ibidem, 25-26. Bouwman, *Johan Maurits*, 76.

<sup>514</sup> NL-HaNA, Aanwinsten 1<sup>e</sup> afdeling ARA, 1.11.01.01, inv. no. 1359.

<sup>515</sup> Den Heijer, *Goud en Indianen*, 43-46.

interesting to note, however, that the XIX directors were even prepared to contemplate this move. They knew of the difficult supply situation in Brazil, but still thought it prudent for Brouwer's force to be resupplied and manned at Recife. This, more than anything else, perhaps best illustrates the dire straits the WIC was in. Only a 'silver bullet' could save the company. Also noteworthy in this context are the lengthy negotiations between the WIC directors and Brouwer over his appointment. Ultimately, Brouwer consented to lead the expedition, but only on the condition that, while in Brazil, he would rank and vote alongside the other members of the High and Secret Council. This is perhaps based on the understanding by Brouwer, an Amsterdam director, of the Artichewsky affair. With the failure of the Chile expedition, the last attempt to increase the size of the WIC's empire in the South Atlantic, ruled from Recife, came to an end. Future operations, though the actors did not know it yet, focused on retention rather than expansion. Maranhão and São Tomé had already rebelled, while there were still bands of Portuguese troops fighting the WIC in the inlands of Angola. In retrospect, it was lucky for Johan Maurits that he left when he did as this allowed later writers, especially Barlaeus, to portray his tenure as a peaceable reign and a flourishing of Dutch Brazil under an enlightened prince. It would have been impossible for Barlaeus to portray this image in 1647 if Johan Maurits had stayed but one or two more years in Brazil.

#### **Enough is enough: dismissal of Johan Maurits, and his attempts to stay, 1642-1644**

By the time the XIX decided in April 1642 to grant Johan Maurits his wish and recall him to the Netherlands, there were thus ample grounds for friction between the governor-general and the directors. Despite notable successes – most importantly, the capture of Elmina in 1637, the conquest of Porto Calvo and the subsequent pacification of the hinterlands of Dutch Brazil in the same year, and the capture of Angola and Maranhão in 1640 – the directors were displeased. Part of this displeasure was perhaps caused by the failure to take Bahia in 1638, an event that could have ended the war then and there. But, more importantly, the administration of Dutch Brazil and its dependencies was turning in on itself. The Artichewsky case, discussed in chapter four, already showed that Johan Maurits was mistrustful of the directors' intentions. By 1642, the directors also had ample evidence that their governor-general was enriching himself at the company's expense, and relations between the High and Secret Council (including the governor-general) and the lower administrations of the colony were in the process of breaking down, particularly between the councils of finances and justice and the High and Secret Council. The attempt to include Angola in the Brazilian government's sphere, albeit logical on economic and strategic grounds, was a further indication that the governor-general in Recife wanted to extend his powers and make the Brazilian government more of a counterweight to the XIX. This was against all WIC policies and ideas for the governance of the colonial empire, going back to the loss of Bahia in 1625. Since then, the XIX had consciously attempted to tie colonial governance very closely to the chambers themselves by, for example, appointing directors as councilors to Brazil in 1634, 1636 and again in 1640.<sup>516</sup> The seizure of captured slaves for his private account near Bahia in 1638, and his free spending on palaces, bridges and so on, would have inclined the directors to see Johan Maurits as a needless expense that could no longer be justified.

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<sup>516</sup> Thus somewhat modifying my statement in an earlier article, where I argued that sending directors to Brazil in 1635-1636 was a rather unique affair; see: C. Antunes, E. Odegard and J. van den Tol, 'The Networks of Dutch Brazil', in: J. Gommans and C. Antunes, *Exploring the Dutch Empire: Agents, Networks and Institutions, 1600-2000*, 77-94, 83.

Furthermore, the WIC's governor-general actively sought to dilute WIC control over its most important colony by appealing directly to the States-General and even arguing that governance of the colony should be conducted rather differently. Johan Maurits, for his part, could look back with dissatisfaction on the disputes over the payment of his share of the spoils of war seized in Brazil, the XIX's vacillating policy on the issue of free trade, the lack of supplies and reinforcements when he most urgently requested them, and the unwillingness of the XIX to extend his powers in Angola.

So there were ample grounds for tension between the parties, but how did the dismissal procedure actually take place? On April 18, the XIX decided to grant Johan Maurits' earlier requests to return home, with this decision being received in Brazil later that summer.<sup>517</sup> Johan Maurits was requested, however, to remain in office for one more year so as to ensure an orderly transition of power. Given, however, the dire straits the company was now in, the WIC could no longer bear the excessive costs of Johan Maurits' court. The XIX decided, therefore, to end his right to a 'free table' and instead to grant him a monthly sum of one thousand guilders for these expenses.<sup>518</sup> In October 1642, Johan Maurits wrote back regarding the granting of his request. Rather than being pleased, he was irritated with the directors. He complained that they had never so much as deigned to reply to his earlier requests and now he was suddenly being 'fired and summoned home'. But though he was pleased that his wish had been granted, he would not return immediately: the letter of the XIX had not been accompanied by an order of the States-General and the stadholder to the effect that he should return. Johan Maurits argued that he served two masters: the company and the Generality, and that as the latter had urgently requested him to remain in Brazil when he last broached the subject, he dared not leave without its express permission. Since Johan Maurits retained his army commission, he felt justified in informing the stadholder, his superior officer, of his actions. Simon Groenveld argued, based on letters in the *Liasen WIC*, that the back-and-forth of letters on Johan Maurits' resignation lend themselves at least as well to an interpretation that he genuinely wished to leave. In this, however, Groenveld disregarded the chronology of the decisions of the XIX. He mentions that '*just before Tolner's mission, Johan Maurits had apparently decided to request his dismissal.[...] On September 12, 1642 he notified the Chambers of the Conquests in Brazil of his decision. Their response too, was sent to the State-General. Finally the Heren XIX decided to grant his request.*'<sup>519</sup> This overlooks the fact, already mentioned in Boxer, that the XIX had already decided to dismiss Johan Maurits in April 1642. When Maurits notified the *Cameras* in September, he was thus not notifying them of *his* decision to leave, but rather of the XIX's decision to fire him. If he had genuinely wanted to return and this was merely the granting of a request, this would make no sense. Boxer, by contrast, argued that by consciously including the protestations of the local population, Johan Maurits attempted to convince the States-General and stadholder to veto the XIX's decision and to maintain him in office.<sup>520</sup>

The dismayed reactions of the *Cameras* in Brazil were forwarded to the States-General, along with the announcement that the XIX had ordered Johan Maurits to return. This is an important point: again Johan Maurits appealed to the States-General to approve a decision

<sup>517</sup> In NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 57. Johan Maurits mentions that he received the resolutions of April 18, 1642 on August 12 of that year.

<sup>518</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 2. scan 289 ff.

<sup>519</sup> S. Groenveld, "De wil was goed maar de macht te klein?: Brazilië in de Nederlandse archieven van Oranje en Nassau", in: M. Wiesenbron (ed.), *Brazilië in de Nederlandse archieven/O Brasil em arquivos neerlandeses (1624-1654): Mauritiania, vol. 3* (CNWS, Leiden 2008), 72-111, 102-104.

<sup>520</sup> Boxer, *The Dutch in Brazil*, 155.

already made by the XIX.<sup>521</sup> In a postscript to his letter of September 24, 1642, the governor-general of Brazil complained fiercely of his treatment by the XIX: *‘God knows how ungratefully I have been treated by the directors for my loyal service to this state. I will, however, remain in doing so and fulfill the service of Your High Mightinesses until such a time that Your High Mightinesses deign to recall me, which I hope will be soon. In the meantime, as I am reported that there are many false and mischievous lies told of me, I would humbly request Your High Mightinesses not to accord them any credibility without hearing from me.’*<sup>522</sup> This complaint and the forwarded reactions of the Luso-Brazilian population are open to various interpretations. I will argue that they show that Johan Maurits was putting on a performance, no doubt inspired by real indignation, with the goal of making it easier for the States-General to intervene in the management of the colony. By complaining of his treatment by the directors and forwarding the reactions of the Luso-Brazilians, he could provide the States-General with ample grounds to overrule the XIX’s decision to recall him. Though he notes that he hoped he would be recalled shortly, this can be seen as a rhetorical twist, forcing the States-General to urge him to stay in the service of the fatherland, as they had done before. This would provide an opportunity to renegotiate items that were of immediate importance to Johan Maurits: money and honor. In the decision of April 12, 1642, the XIX had unilaterally decided to end his right to a ‘free table’, and instead provided him with one thousand guilders a month for provisions and maintaining his household. But, as shown in chapter four, the actual cost of feeding Johan Maurits’ household exceeded nine thousand guilders a month. The difference would thus have to be made up either by Johan Maurits himself or by reducing the size of the household. We could even hypothesize that this was the real objective of the XIX: by forcing a reduction in the size of Johan Maurits’ household, they took away an important tool of patronage. In addition, it dealt a severe blow to a symbol of Johan Maurits’ power. Whatever the objective of the XIX, Johan Maurits was very clearly displeased as this would either cost him a lot of his own money, or would lower his status by forcing a reduction in his household. This rankled with him, and was in direct conflict with the eleventh article of his original contract, signed in 1636: *‘But on the contrary, one now cuts my food allowance so that I will hardly be able to afford the butter for my court. Consider what a sum of a thousand guilders is in proportion to a table which corresponds to my quality and office. [...] The company is obliged, on the strength of the eleventh article of the condition presented to me by your honors themselves, to keep a free table for me and my court.’*<sup>523</sup> Johan Maurits was further displeased that the XIX had requested him to stay for another year, but had not increased his pay. This was in contrast to way in which the WIC regularly treated its employees *‘who after expiration of their contracted period are offered an increase in pay’*.<sup>524</sup>

This provided an opportunity for the community of notable Luso-Brazilian residents in the colony to endear themselves to Johan Maurits. Five of them, themselves described as ‘his

<sup>521</sup> NL-HaNA, States-General, 1.01.02, inv. no. 5757, Johan Maurits to the States-General, September 24, 1642 and April 3, 1643.

<sup>522</sup> NL-HaNA, States-General, 1.01.02, inv. no. 5757, Johan Maurits to the States-General, September 24, 1642, *‘Hoe ondangbaerlick ick van Bewinthebberen beloont worde, voor mijn getrouw dienst, aen desen staedt bewesen, wiet Godt, sal niet te min hier in patienteren ende den dienst van Uwe Ho:Mog. nae mijn vermoogen waernemen, tot dat uwe Ho:Mog gelieven sal mij ’t huis ontbieden, t’welcke verhope dat in corten sal geschieden. Ondertusschen also ick bericht wordt datter vele valsche en schelmachtige leugenen tegens mij worden uijtgestrooit wil uwe Ho:Mog. onderdanigh versocht hebben daer aen geen gelove te geven sonder alvoren mij daer op te hooren.’*

<sup>523</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 57, *‘maar ter contrarie men besnijdt mijn mondcosten soodanich datter nauwelijcx de boter tot mijn hofhoudinge moge nuytvalen, ick geve ieder een te considereren wat proportie een simme van duijssent guldens ter maant heeft wegens een disch die met mijn qualiteit en charge over een compt De Comp. is nuyt cracht vant 11 arlu[articul] der conditien mij bij Ued. Hr. selfst voorgedragen en gepresenteert verbonden voor mij ende mijn gevolg te houden een vrije tafel.’*

<sup>524</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 69, with special thanks to Joris van den Tol for pointing me towards this source and for generously providing a transcription.

Excellency's loyal servants' – Paulo Antonio Dias, Gregorio de Barros Pereira, Cosmo de Crasto Paços, João Vieira and Anto Vieira – offered to pay a voluntary tax of half a *pataque* on every chest of sugar in order to help fund the household costs of Johan Maurits by, for example, providing uniforms for his footmen.<sup>525</sup> They phrased this brilliantly by observing that '*Your Excellency is so abhorrent of all avarice*'.<sup>526</sup> Clearly, Johan Maurits' need to keep up a court befitting a nobleman 'of his distinction' created opportunities for the local communities to endear themselves to the governor and to obtain favorable conditions for their own operations. Even, however, in this diminished position, Johan Maurits' status as governor-general of Dutch Brazil was far higher than what he could hope to enjoy at home as colonel in charge of a regiment of Walloon infantry. His monthly pay in Brazil was higher, he could afford a larger retinue of followers, and he commanded more troops and ships over a vastly larger area of operations. If he returned to the Netherlands, he could, of course, try to obtain a promotion to a rank of high standing and remuneration, but this was by no means certain. His status as a Nassau nobleman would count for little in competition with other Nassaus from more senior branches of the family. So status in itself was an excellent argument for Johan Maurits to use in an attempt to stay. Another was money. Despite his excellent monthly salary in Brazil, Johan Maurits was still on the cusp of bankruptcy in 1642, the Mauritshuis and his Brazilian palaces having devoured his income. In his diary, Willem Frederik, the Frisian stadholder, noted the dire financial straits of the Brazilian governor-general in September 1643:

*Overste [a lower officer rank] Kijn told me that Count Mauritz had only got three extraordinary presents, one worth 180 thousand guilders – 600 chests of sugar of 300 guilders a chest. And then two other ones, not worth as much, so that the three presents of the Portuguese merchants are worth between the four- and five hundred thousand guilders, all of which he has lavished on the house, except for some debts which he also repaid [...] his intention was to stay some three years longer, though he pretends otherwise, to prosper a bit. He has also built a house there, which has cost him much, over 100 thousand guilders. In total he still has 300 thousand guilders with him, and if he returns so soon he will be ruined, for the house in The Hague needs to be furnished to suit its state, and his household as well, which is not feasible.*<sup>527</sup>

This is a powerful statement on how a fellow nobleman judged Johan Maurits' intentions and possibilities in the fall of 1643, shortly after the latter had informed the States-General that he would not be returning in the spring of 1643 but only later. In addition, he then requested confirmation that the States-General agreed to his return.<sup>528</sup> This appeal was overruled by a similar but reverse appeal by the XIX to confirm his dismissal. Johan Maurits was nevertheless

<sup>525</sup> In the source the Portuguese names are (mis)spelled as follows: Paulo Antonio Daens, Gegorio de Baros Pereira, Cosmo de Crasto Pacos, Joa Vierro and Anto Viera.

<sup>526</sup> Koninklijk Huisarchief, A4 collectie Johan Maurits, inv. no. 1454, fol. 275-276.

<sup>527</sup> *Gloria Parendi diary 1643, '... den oversten Kijn seide mij, dat graf Mauritz maer drie extraordinaerische presenten hadde bekomen, een van 180 duisent gulden, te weten 600 kisten suycker ende elck kist gold 300 gulden. - Daernaech noch twee andere, die sooveel niet weert waeren, sodat dese drie presenten van de Portegise coophuyden beloopt tuschen de vier- en vijfmael hondertduisent gulden, dewelcke hij alle aen het huys heeft gehangen, behalven eenige weinich schulden die oock betaelt sijn, [...] Dat sijn opinie oock was daer noch een jaer off drie te blieven, als gaf hij anders uyt, om noch yetwas te prospereren, dan hij daer oock een huys gebant heeft, 'twelck hem veel kost, oover de 100 duysent gulden. - Dat hij in alles noch bie hem heeft 300 duisent gulden, ende als hij so rasch weerkomt, dat hij geruineert is, want naer advenant het gebau van het huys dat in Den Haech staet, moet het gemeubleert sijn ende het huysholden oock daernaech, niet doentlijk.'*

<sup>528</sup> NL-HaNA States-General, 1.01.02 inv. no. 5757, Johan Maurits to the States-General, April 3, 1643.

still able to postpone his departure from Brazil until May of the following year, and so more than two years after the XIX had dismissed him. His final act of governance was to compose his ‘political testament’, in which he offered advice on and insight into the governance of Brazil. This document was prescient, like the papers presented by Tolner, as it identified the greatest threat to the colony – now that there was an official ceasefire with Portugal – as a revolt by the planters. To prevent this, the population needed to be governed gently, and religious freedom liberties for Catholics should be maintained. Johan Maurits’ ‘testament’ has been analyzed, and lauded, elsewhere, but it is noteworthy that, when in the Republic, he presented this document first to the States-General and only later to the XIX. This fits in well with the mission by Karel Tolner, who also argued that governance of the colony needed to change. The ‘testament’ can thus be seen not only as well-meant advice for better governance of the colony, but also as an attempt to change the colony’s relationship with the company and the Dutch state. When the preparations for the *secours* came up for debate in 1646, Johan Maurits once again stressed that despite the revolt, good relations with the planters were crucial, noting that ‘*the conquest of Brazil without the Portuguese would not offer the company much advantage.*’<sup>529</sup> Again, this advice was offered to the States-General rather than to the directors of the company, with whom he had an ongoing dispute over back-payments.<sup>530</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter has examined the tenure of Johan Maurits in Brazil from 1640 onwards, focusing on the development of his relations with the directors of the WIC, as well as with the lower branches of administration in the government of Brazil, and asking whether we can accurately argue that Johan Maurits was fired, or whether his return to the Netherlands can better be understood as the belated granting of his own wishes. In seeking to answer this question, this chapter has taken a closer look at the institutional development of the government of Dutch Brazil after the Portuguese revolt against Habsburg rule in 1640. The focus has been on the development of the highest level of governance in the colony, the High and Secret Council. This has been another overlooked aspect in the career of Johan Maurits, along with the appointment procedure and his performance as a military commander in Brazil. The chapter has shown that the WIC’s government of Brazil broke down through internecine strife in the first four years of the 1640s. It could be said that this was the second time this had happened as similar disagreements over the rights and duties of subaltern councils – such as the councils of justice and finance, and the public works department, which this chapter dealt with at length – had also arisen in the first half of the 1630s. This casts a somewhat different light on the tenure of Johan Maurits in Brazil. Although his tenure has often been described as the ‘happy years’ of the colony, this chapter has shown how the colonial administration entered a deathly spiral of strife and bickering in the second half of this tenure. This spiral helps, in large part, to explain the sudden and dramatic losses incurred shortly after open rebellion broke out in the second half of the 1640s, while also helping to explain the background to the dismissal of Johan Maurits, and showing that it was indeed a dismissal.

At the heart of the WIC’s problems in Brazil were a lack of finances and, from the early 1640s onwards, the changing position of the WIC and its ventures in Dutch domestic policies.

<sup>529</sup> NL-HaNA, States-General, 1.01.02, 12564-20A, unfoliated. Johan Maurits to the States-General, January 29, 1646.

<sup>530</sup> Evaldo Cabral de Mello, *De Braziliaanse affaire*, 43.

The winding-down of the war effort against Spain, and the increasingly antagonistic relations between the stadholder and, especially, Amsterdam, meant that the alliance that had supported the WIC throughout the 1630s had started to break down. This alliance between Amsterdam (in the figure of Albert Coenraetsz. Burgh) and the stadholder, as I argued in chapter four, had also provided the impetus and support for Johan Maurits' appointment in 1636. A breakdown in this alliance had obvious implications for his position.

But events in Brazil also made themselves felt in the perception of Johan Maurits' performance among relevant circles in the Netherlands. His lavish spending on his court, personal projects such as the bridge connecting Recife and Mauritsstad, misappropriations of public funds and goods, and the persistent claims of corruption and embezzlement among members of the High Government had cast a shadow over his performance. However, this was not entirely Johan Maurits' fault. To understand where he went wrong, it is insightful to make a brief comparison with Adriaan van Bullestrate, who was at the center of many of the complaints leveled against the Brazilian government in the period 1640-1644. In contrast to Johan Maurits, Adriaan van Bullestrate remained in office until the new administration took over in 1646.<sup>531</sup> This seems puzzling at first sight: if Johan Maurits was removed, why not the obviously problematic Bullestrate? The answer lies in the latter's regional background and backing. He had been council and treasurer of Middelburg prior to his Brazilian appointment, and frequently forwarded private memos directly to the Zeeland chamber.<sup>532</sup> His relatives regularly appeared in the minutes of the Zeeland chamber, requesting the right to withdraw funds from his account.<sup>533</sup> Van Bullestrate obviously enjoyed good relations with the Zeeland chamber and they shielded 'their' man in Brazil. Once again, this reflected the fractured state of the WIC's administration overseas.

In contrast to the VOC, the WIC's high colonial officials very clearly represented a specific chamber. The only exception was Johan Maurits, who no longer had the backing of a powerful chamber. Although Zeeland would in principle be inclined to support a Nassau, it must be remembered that Johan Maurits had, in effect, singlehandedly scuttled Zeeland's attempts to close the trade to Brazil in the late 1630s.<sup>534</sup> That would have endeared him to Amsterdam, but the growing rift between the stadholder and Holland's most powerful city also undermined Johan Maurits' standing in that chamber. Johan Maurits' actions in the Artichewsky case also damaged his position, especially with the crucial Albert Coenraetsz. Burgh, who had been behind the appointments of both Artichewsky and Johan Maurits. These trends were exacerbated by Johan Maurits himself, who did not actively try to gain the support of the chambers and individual directors. Instead, his attempts to go over their heads and appeal directly to the States-General made him even more of an opponent. Could he have foreseen the consequences of this? Willem Frederik's diary again contains an insightful observation:

*He has made a big mistake in not getting to know the chambers and the directors, leaving everything to the States-General and His Highness [stadholder Frederik Hendrik], who were then unable to maintain him. and the directors, being jealous of him, have piqued him in every which way, for he did not*

<sup>531</sup> Bick, *Governing the Free Seas*, 167-171.

<sup>532</sup> In 1643, for example, the following letters: NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01, inv. no. 58.55; inv. no. 58.132, June 11, 1643; inv. no. 58.68, August 13, 1643; inv. no. 58.83 September 18, 1643; inv. no. 58.84 21-9-1643; inv. no. 58.86 October 20, 1643. In addition, there were letters from the Zeeland directors addressed only to Van Bullestrate.

<sup>533</sup> NL-HaNA, OWIC, 1.05.01.01 inv. no. 25, April 7 1642.

<sup>534</sup> See chapter 4.



*know them and did not write them enough, but only to the States and His Highness, always complaining of the directors that they did not meet their promises.*<sup>535</sup>

Did Johan Maurits actually wish to end his assignment in Brazil? This is unlikely for the reasons mentioned earlier: money and honor. His actions also seem inconsistent with this wish. Why, for example, send Karel Tolner to The Hague in 1643 if he could simply have followed the orders of the States-General and returned of his own accord? The very formalistic argument that he served the state as well as the company smacks of a delaying tactic, intended to give the States-General time to intervene. The contents of Tolner's documents support this line of thinking as Johan Maurits argued in these documents for a change in the administration of the colonies. The fact that the XIX took the opportunity of Johan Maurits' dismissal to remodel the entire administrative model for the colony shows the XIX's deep dissatisfaction with his performance as an administrator.

So Johan Maurits was dismissed, while the equally problematic Adriaan van Bullestrate was allowed to remain in office. The former's dismissal was admittedly coupled with an order to stay in Brazil for a while longer. But by denying Johan Maurits the instrument of the 'free table', the directors knowingly and consciously decided to break the networks around their governor. It is unsurprising that Johan Maurits protested fiercely against exactly this provision, which was both humiliating and financially costly. The dismissal hurt Johan Maurits in the short term as his previous earnings in the Republic were only a fraction of what he had earned in Brazil. In addition, the governor-general's social standing in Brazil was rather higher than that of an infantry colonel. In the long run, however, the dismissal proved to be a blessing in disguise as Johan Maurits left before Brazil erupted properly in revolt in 1645. This, in turn, made it possible for Caspar van Baerle (Barlaeus) to present the tenure of Johan Maurits as the 'happy period' of Dutch Brazil in his *Rerum per Octennium in Brasilia* of 1647. This image was strengthened by the publication of Willem Piso's *Historia Naturalis Brasiliae* the following year. Over the years, Johan Maurits was also able to build on this image by exchanging his collection of paintings for honorific titles and noble gifts, thus burnishing his reputation as a count, and later a prince, of the German Empire. Johan Maurits' exploits after Brazil will be discussed in more detail in the final chapter of this book. Suffice it to say here that during the later 1640s and 1650s, as Dutch Brazil fell, he was able to successfully turn his collection of Braziliana into a network of connections linking him to several of Europe's royal houses, thus boosting his prestige, albeit not improving his credit rating. Though Brazil in effect marked the death knell of the WIC, Johan Maurits was able to turn his tenure there into a long-term success by burnishing his reputation and honor to such an extent that subsequent biographies and historiography were based largely on material produced to promote this vision of an 'enlightened prince in the tropics'. Getting dismissed at the right time played a crucial role in this long-term success.

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<sup>535</sup> Willem Frederik, *Gloria Parendi*, diary 1643. 'Dat hij een groote foute heeft gedaen, de caemers ende de bewinthebbers niet te kennen, laetende het alles op de Staeten-General en S.H. affloopen, die hem daernaer niet hebben kunnen maintaineren, ende de bewinthebbers van hem jalous sijnde, hebben hem bie alle maeniren gepijckeert, omdat hij haer niet meer en kende, want hij noit ofte weinich aen haer schreef, maer all aen de Staeten en S.H., ende klaechde altijd seer oover de bewinthebbers, dat se haer beloften niet hielden.'

