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# Mauritius and the Netherlands: current linkages and the heritage of connections

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## Current linkages

For a country bearing a name that refers to the Netherlands, the current linkages with the Netherlands are quite limited. Mauritius is named after a Dutch political hero: Prince Maurits of Nassau, stadholder of Holland and Zeeland between 1585 and 1625<sup>2</sup>, and the son and successor of the 'Father of the Nation', William of Orange after he was murdered in 1584. Maurits successfully led the revolt ('*opstand*') against Spain, the former ruler of the Netherlands. The island received its name 'Mauritius' (or earlier spelt as "'t Eylant Mauwerijcye de Nassau"; Moree, 2012) in 1595. During that year Maurits was twenty-eight years old.

*Figures 1, 2 and 3: Maurits of Nassau in 1588, in 1607 and in 1614<sup>3</sup>, and Figure 4: Maurits on a Mauritian postage stamp celebrating the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dutch landing 1598-1998<sup>4</sup>.*



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<sup>2</sup> In 1590 he also became stadholder of Utrecht, Gelre and Overijssel, and in 1620 of Groningen and Drenthe. Together with Friesland they would form the Republic of the United Netherlands, or 'Dutch Republic'. The 'eighty-years' war with Spain was formally over in 1648.

<sup>3</sup> Figure 1: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/06/Stadhuiscollectie\\_Arnemuiden\\_-\\_Prins\\_Maurits\\_-\\_NL-MdbZA\\_1902\\_6.jpg/800px-Stadhuiscollectie\\_Arnemuiden\\_-\\_Prins\\_Maurits\\_-\\_NL-MdbZA\\_1902\\_6.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/0/06/Stadhuiscollectie_Arnemuiden_-_Prins_Maurits_-_NL-MdbZA_1902_6.jpg/800px-Stadhuiscollectie_Arnemuiden_-_Prins_Maurits_-_NL-MdbZA_1902_6.jpg); Maurits in 1588 (age: 21); painted by Daniel van den Queborn. Figure 2: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/84/School\\_of\\_Michiel\\_Jansz.\\_van\\_Mierevelt\\_001.jpg/220px-School\\_of\\_Michiel\\_Jansz.\\_van\\_Mierevelt\\_001.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/84/School_of_Michiel_Jansz._van_Mierevelt_001.jpg/220px-School_of_Michiel_Jansz._van_Mierevelt_001.jpg). Portrait by Michiel Jansz. van Mierevelt, 1607 (age 40).

Figure 3:

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/26/Emanuel\\_van\\_Meteren\\_Historie\\_ppn\\_051504510\\_MG\\_8743\\_maurits\\_van\\_nassau.tif/lossy-page1-220px-Emanuel\\_van\\_Meteren\\_Historie\\_ppn\\_051504510\\_MG\\_8743\\_maurits\\_van\\_nassau.tif.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/26/Emanuel_van_Meteren_Historie_ppn_051504510_MG_8743_maurits_van_nassau.tif/lossy-page1-220px-Emanuel_van_Meteren_Historie_ppn_051504510_MG_8743_maurits_van_nassau.tif.jpg); Maurits in 1614 (age: 47); in Emanuel van Meteren.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.mauritius.org.uk/stamps11.jpg>

Currently, Mauritius does not have an Embassy in The Hague (it has a consulate in Amsterdam, though; and its European Embassies are restricted to Belgium/EU; the UK, France, Germany, Russia and Switzerland/UN<sup>5</sup>). And the Netherlands does not have an Embassy in Mauritius either. It has an honorary consul in Port Louis, and Mauritius is under the Netherlands Embassy in Dar es Salaam, that also takes care of Madagascar, the Comoros Islands, and of course Tanzania<sup>6</sup>. If we look at the current diplomatic network that connects Mauritius to the rest of the world Mauricians in the Netherlands are referred to the Mauritian Embassy in Brussels.

Embassies and (honorary) consulates often have many different tasks, but two aspects are most prominent: supporting citizens, and assisting trade, both imports and exports.

Between 1995 and 2016 368 Mauricians (181 women and 187 men) migrated to the Netherlands, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics in the Netherlands<sup>7</sup>. During the same period 275 Dutch citizens migrated to Mauritius (131 women and 144 men) according to the same source. During the last few years mobility to and fro has increased. According to the UN Population Division the total number of Mauricians in the Netherlands at any point in time has increased from ca 100 in 1990 to ca 400 in 2015<sup>8</sup>. Specific figures about Dutch citizens in Mauritius are not given, and the Mauritian statistical office includes migrants from the Netherlands under ‘Other Europeans’<sup>9</sup>, while the UN puts them under ‘Other North’. It is obvious, though, that migration movements between Mauritius and the Netherlands are relatively insignificant, compared to other countries, and it is interesting to see how the Netherlands compares with other countries, and what shifts are taking place: see table 1.

Table 1: Migration to and from Mauritius, 1990-2015 (x100)<sup>10</sup>

	Migration to Mauritius from						Migration from Mauritius to					
	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
NL	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	3	3	3	4

<sup>5</sup> Mauritius Diplomatic Missions Abroad, <http://foreign.govmu.org/English/Pages/Embassies%20and%20Consulates/Mauritius-Embassies--Consulates-Abroad.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl/landen/mauritius>

<sup>7</sup> <http://statline.cbs.nl/Statweb/publication/?DM=SLNL&PA=03742&D1=0-4&D2=0&D3=0&D4=0-2,9,25,31,40,69,77,93-94,96,146,221&D5=0&D6=a&HDR=T,G5&STB=G1,G2,G4,G3&VW=T;>

“immigratie en emigratie naar geboorteland, inclusief administratieve correcties”.

<sup>8</sup> [www.UN.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates15.shtml](http://www.UN.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates15.shtml)

<sup>9</sup> [Statsmauritius.govmu.org/English/pages/2000/volumeIV/inter.htm#33](http://Statsmauritius.govmu.org/English/pages/2000/volumeIV/inter.htm#33).

<sup>10</sup> See [www.UN.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data](http://www.UN.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data); population data for Mauritius are as given by the World Bank, based on CSO data from Mauritius, see: Population Mauritius: [https://www.google.nl/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9\\_&met\\_y=sp\\_pop\\_totl&idim=country:MUS:MDV&hl=nl&dl=nl](https://www.google.nl/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_&met_y=sp_pop_totl&idim=country:MUS:MDV&hl=nl&dl=nl).

France	8	7	10	11	13	15	381	393	406	390	410	443
UK	7	5	5	4	4	5	229	243	262	319	402	451
EUROPE	18	14	18	19	23	26	740	776	820	870	984	1075
America	1	1	1	1	1	1	51	58	66	96	132	148
Oceania	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	19	20	27	29
Oth N.	1	1	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
S. Asia	6	17	36	95	159	183	25	15	4	3	3	3
E. Asia	5	34	81	52	26	30	0	0	0	0	0	0
Africa	3	5	9	17	26	30	65	69	85	104	138	169
Other S.	3	4	7	9	12	14	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	36	75	155	196	248	286	1079	1115	1160	1277	1528	1683
EUR %	50	19	12	10	9	9	69	70	71	68	64	64
<i>POP M.</i>	<i>1059</i>	<i>1122</i>	<i>1187</i>	<i>1228</i>	<i>1250</i>	<i>1263</i>	<i>1059</i>	<i>1122</i>	<i>1187</i>	<i>1228</i>	<i>1250</i>	<i>1263</i>
<i>X1000</i>												
<i>POP+MIGR</i>							<i>1167</i>	<i>1234</i>	<i>1303</i>	<i>1356</i>	<i>1403</i>	<i>1431</i>
<i>Migr%</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>0.7</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>1.6</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>2.3</i>	<i>9.2</i>	<i>9.0</i>	<i>8.9</i>	<i>9.4</i>	<i>10.9</i>	<i>11.8</i>

During the last twenty-five years migration to Mauritius has always been much lower than migration from Mauritius, but both have increased between 1990 and 2015. Migration to Mauritius shows a major shift: in 1990 half of all migration to Mauritius still came from Europe (with France and the UK dominating) while in 2015 Europe's role has become relatively insignificant, due to an considerable increase of migration from South Asia (first mainly India, later also Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan) and East Asia (mainly China and Malaysia), but also because of relatively increasing migration from other African countries, particularly Madagascar, and South Africa. Within Europe France's position has become more important as a supplier of migrants to Mauritius, while the UK has become less important.

However, as destination countries for Mauritian migrants Europe as a whole is still very important, and France and the UK are comparable and important destinations if we look at

numbers of Mauritian migrants. The importance of South Asia has dwindled. The slight decrease of Europe’s importance as a destination area is a result of the Americas (and mainly the USA) and Oceania (mainly Australia) gaining ground, but also the growing importance of Mauritian migration to other African destinations, particularly South Africa, Réunion, and Botswana. As can be seen, and deduced, the role of the Netherlands as a country of origin and as a destination country of migrants is very limited: much below one percent of all migrants to and fro.

The second role of diplomatic missions is the support of economic relationships: investments and trade to and fro. For trade relations we can use a website that provides annual data for products and services since 2001<sup>11</sup>, but the bilateral data are restricted to trade in products<sup>12</sup>. Table 2 presents a comparison of imports and exports of products between Mauritius and the Netherlands and other Mauritian trading partners between 2001 and 2016<sup>13</sup>.

Table 2: Mauritian imports and exports of products, 2001 and 2016

Country/ REGION	Imports of Products				Exports of products			
	2001		2016		2001		2016	
	M\$	%	M\$	%	M\$	%	M\$	%
Netherlands	23	1	32	1	27	2	72	3
France	188	9	365	8	308	20	325	15
UK	72	4	101	2	476	31	264	12
EUROPE	603	30	1105	24	1039	68	1108	51
AMERICA	102	5	242	5	314	21	272	12
OCEANIA	98	5	174	4	4	0	18	1
China&HK	189	9	844	18	6	0	60	3
India	159	8	768	17	2	0	16	1

<sup>11</sup> [www.trademap.org](http://www.trademap.org)

<sup>12</sup> International trade in services: data are given from 2005 onwards, but without showing origin and destination. For Mauritius the trade in services is important: in 2005 it imported for \$1.2 billion services and for \$3.2 billion products, and it exported for \$1.6 billion services and \$2.1 billion products. In 2016 imports of services had risen to \$2.1 billion for services and \$4.7 billion for products, while exports had grown to \$2.9 billion for services and only \$2.2 billion for products.

<sup>13</sup> Figures for 2016 are still provisional.

ASIA	826	41	2507	54	24	1	364	17
South Africa	271	14	349	7	12	1	179	8
AFRICA	362	18	627	13	140	9	432	20
TOTAL	1992	100	4655	100	1521	100	2194	100

HK=Hong Kong; UK= United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Mauritian-Netherlands trade relations are not very important: Mauritian imports from the Netherlands are close to 1% of all Mauritian imports, while, relatively speaking, the Netherlands is slightly more important as a destination area for Mauritian products, and that relative importance grew between 2001 and 2016. But 3% is still insignificant. As a source of Mauritian imports Asia has become much more important than Europe, and within Europe France was and is most important. As a destination for Mauritian products Europe is still leading, but its relative dominance has become less during these fifteen years. Within Europe France took over the leading position from the UK. Both Asia and other countries in Africa have become much more important during these fifteen years, in Asia Vietnam, the United Arab Emirates and China/Hong Kong have become leading destination countries in 2016 and in Africa South Africa and Madagascar.

Table 3: Shifts in relative importance of the Netherlands for Mauritius and Mauritius for the Netherlands as a trading partner, 2001-2016<sup>14</sup>.

	M imp from NL Mill.\$	M imp from World Bill.\$	Maur: NL/W %	NL exp to World Bill.\$	M/NL %	M exp to NL Mill.\$	M exp to World Bill.\$	Maur: NL/W %	NL imp from World Bill.\$	M/NL %
2001	23	2.0	1.1	216	0.011	27	1.5	1.8	196	0.014
2005	16	3.2	0.5	350	0.005	24	2.1	1.1	311	0.008
2010	49	4.4	1.1	493	0.010	27	1.8	1.5	440	0.006
2011	60	5.2	1.2	531	0.011	35	2.3	1.5	493	0.007
2012	68	5.8	1.2	552	0.012	40	2.3	1.7	501	0.008
2013	40	5.4	0.7	571	0.007	60	2.3	2.3	506	0.012

<sup>14</sup> Again: [www.trademap.org](http://www.trademap.org).



2014	28	5.6	0.5	571	0.005	67	2.7	2.5	508	0.013
2015	23	4.5	0.5	474	0.005	66	2.5	2.6	425	0.016
2016	32	4.7	0.7	445	0.007	72	2.2	3.3	398	0.018

In Table 3 it can be seen that the relative importance of the Netherlands for Mauritius as a trading partner was between 0.5% and 1.2% for Mauritian imports during the years 2001-2016 and between 1.1% and 3.3% for Mauritian exports. For the Netherlands Mauritius was much less important in relative terms: between 0.005% and 0.012% for exports from the Netherlands and between 0.006% and 0.018% for imports to the Netherlands. What were those imports and exports? We compare the years 2001 and 2016 in table4. The Netherlands' exports to Mauritius mainly deal with machinery and dairy in both years, and fish in 2001<sup>15</sup>. Mauritian exports to the Netherlands are mainly clothing (knitted and unknitted), and sugar (products), but in recent years prepared seafood products dominate. Recently this sector has become very important for Mauritius: "Seafood transshipment and processing has ... emerged as an important sector of the economy...The Mauritius port and Freeport (free trade zone) offer services and infrastructure for the transshipment of fish. The Mauritius Freeport offers more than 80,000 cubic meters of cold room facilities"<sup>16</sup>. For trade with the Netherlands seafood has surpassed clothing and sugar.

Table 4: Mauritian imports from the Netherlands and Mauritian exports to the Netherlands: composition; 2001 and 2016.

Products (and categories)	Mauritian Imports from the Netherlands ; mill\$ (and %)		Mauritian exports to the Netherlands; mill \$ (and %)	
	2001	2016	2001	2016
Machinery (84)	7.8 (34%)	8.3 (26%)	0.0 ( 0%)	1.7 ( 2%)
Dairy (04)	2.4 (11%)	3.2 (10%)		
Veg. & Fruits (20)	0.3 ( 1%)	2.4 ( 7%)		
Beverages (22)	0.2 ( 1%)	1.8 ( 6%)		

<sup>15</sup> and in many years in between, in 2012 fish imports were even 45 million\$, and a lot of it leaves Mauritius as 'preparations of fish etc'. However the trade figures for fish imports are very volatile, while those for seafood preparation exports show a steady line upwards. This category includes "preparations of meat or fish or crustaceans, molluscs or other aquatic invertebrates".

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.export.gov/article?id=Mauritius-Refrigeration-Seafood>

Cocoa (18)	0.0 ( 0%)	1.5 ( 5%)		
Min. fuels (27)	0.0 ( 0%)	1.1 ( 3%)		
Plastics (39)	1.1 ( 5%)	0.6 ( 2%)		
Fish (03)	4.7 (21%)	0.2 ( 1%)		
Preparations of seafood etc (16)			1.5 ( 6%)	34.5 (48%)
Clothing (61+62)			21.3 (79%)	23.6 (33%)
Sugar (17)			1.6 ( 6%)	7.4 (10%)
Opticals (90)			1.9 ( 7%)	0.0 ( 0%)
Total	22.8 (100%)	32.4 (100%)	26.8 (100%)	71.6 (100%)

Categories according to [www.trademap.org](http://www.trademap.org)

In conclusion we can say that the current linkages between Mauritius and the Netherlands are limited and relatively unimportant: both countries do not have an Embassy in each other's capital cities; migration to and fro is below one percent of all migration movements, and the role of the Netherlands in international trade has been between 0.5 and 1.2 percent for Mauritian imports and between 1.1 and 3.3 percent of Mauritian exports between 2001 and 2016, with seafood currently dominating. This was much different in the early years of Mauritian-Dutch relationships.

### **Mauritius as a VOC station between 1638 and 1710, after the Dutch landing in 1598.**

During the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Netherlands had (or tried to have) a monopoly position in Mauritius. Mauritius was one of the hubs in the trading network of the *Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC, the United East India Company of the Republic of the United Provinces in the Netherlands). Many writers, with various backgrounds, have written about this history, and later in this chapter we will look at that written heritage. Here we will summarize a chronology of the two major elements of Dutch involvement in Mauritius during this period: on the one hand the VOC presence and those of Freeburghers (*Vrijburgers*, who were mostly Dutch and others who settled in Mauritius after servicing the VOC), and on the other hand the slaves, maroons (escaped slaves), and convicts brought to Mauritius during this period.

Table 5: chronology of events in Mauritius

I 1500s until 1637

Year	Events
1502	Mauritius appeared on a European (Italian) map (Cantino; see Figure 5).
1511	Domingos Fernandez Pereira, a Portuguese navigator was the first European to land in Mauritius. He named the island 'Ilha do Cirne' (isle of the swan = dodo). The Portuguese left behind pigs, rats and other animals (also Dutch and other ships later left behind rats, which became a major scourge on the island, and a problem for the establishment of agriculture).
1598	Vice –Admiral Wybrant (van) Warwyck of the <i>Oude Oost-Indische Compagnie</i> landed on Mauritius ("Warwijck Harbour", on what is currently Vieux Grand Port) with a fleet of five ships on his way to the East Indies (it was the second Dutch expedition to the 'spice islands' in the East Indies, the first one started in 1595). Warwyck's account got published in Dutch, English, German and Latin.
1601	Admiral Wolfert Harmensz visited Rodrigues and Mauritius with the 'Moluccan Fleet' (including the <i>Gelderland</i> ). The ship's artist (probably Joris Laerle) made many drawings, including the dodo, published in 1602.
1602	Start of the <i>Verenigde Oostindië Compagnie</i> , with headquarters in Amsterdam.
1606	Admiral Corn. Matelief de Jonge attempted to create a refreshment station, planted trees, and introduced goats.
1610	Visit of Dutch Governor General (Batavia) Pieter Both. A female passenger on board his ship gave birth on Mauritius, called 'Mauritia', the first-ever child born on the island.
1612	Future Governor General Jan Pieterszoon Coen and explorer Joris van Spilbergen visited Mauritius
1615	On its homeward trip Pieter Both's ship wrecked near the north west side of Mauritius.

II 1637 onwards

Year	VOC and Freeburghers	Slaves, Maroons and Convicts
1637	VOC decided to take full possession of the island after serious rumors about a forthcoming English occupation. They decided to start the exploitation of ebony forests, and collection of ambergris.	

1638-1639	Pieter de Gooyer VOC Commander of Mauritius arrived on the Maen ship, with 25 Europeans; building of the 'Fortress' Frederik Hendrik	
1639-1645	Adriaen van der Stel VOC Commander; introduced sugarcane	1639: the first three slaves brought (two from Oman, one from Bengal, but all coming from Batavia (the major VOC hub in the East; later: Jakarta).
1641-1645		Three visits to Madagascar to buy slaves; ca >100 Malagasy slaves were brought to Mauritius
1642		"Malagasy slaves fled into the interior almost immediately upon their landing in 1642" (Alpers 2003: 53)
1645-1648	Jacob van der Meersch VOC Commander; first road built (to Flacq, to enable transport of ebony)	Slaves from Madagascar (>150); partly shipped to Batavia (many die in the East). 1642-1647 six expeditions to various parts of Madagascar, together >500 slaves acquired.
1644		First 'maroon hunt'.
1648-1653	Reynier Por VOC Commander; expansion of sugar cane	At some point less than 20 slaves left on Mauritius
1649		Maroon campaign to find 'escaped slaves' in the interior; Amboinese convicts revolted; sent back to Batavia
1652	Jan van Riebeeck started VOC refreshment station at the Cape; all VOC vessels required to go there. Less interest in Mauritius <sup>17</sup> .	
1653-1654	Chaotic period; interim management by Van der Woutbeek and Maximiliaan de Jongh; orders from Amsterdam to stop felling ebony and cultivate sugarcane; reduction of	

<sup>17</sup> Sleight 2000: 51: "Mauritius was neither on the outward nor on the homeward leg of the most economical route...and only thirteen visits of the 382 ships on the outward run, and four of the 199 ships on the homeward run, were recorded during the twenty years of the first Dutch occupation of Mauritius" (figures based on Bruijn et al, 1979).

	people.	
1654-1656	Maximiliaan de Jong VOC governor; on the Island: 60 VOC people and a few Freeburgher (Bonaparte 1890: 57: "l'île est abandonnée"; but that is untrue)	No information about the numbers of slaves and maroons
1656-1658	Mauritius degraded to a 'Buitenpost' (outer station) of the Cape; garrison reduced to 20 men; Abraham Evertsz VOC representative under Cape Administration	
1657	VOC decision to abandon Mauritius	
1658	Most people left the island; Fort destroyed; people and equipment transported to Ceylon and Batavia.	Some maroons stayed on the Island, including deserted sailors.
1662	Shipwreck of Arnhem VOC ship; survivors on Mauritius; growing likelihood of French or English occupation, and threat to VOC in south west Indian Ocean area.	One survivor killed 'by five African maroons'
1663	Decision to re-establish VOC 'buitenpost'	
1664-1665	Jacob van Nieuwland VOC Governor; came with 12 people, who all escaped, but were recaptured.	
1664	Jan van der Laar and Dirck Janszoon Smient VOC Governors after death of JvN; 32 extra people; ebony felling resumed.	Slaves from the East
1669-1671	Georg Frederik Wreede VOC Governor (he was a German; turbulent period; drowned near Mauritius).	
1671-1673	Pieter Philip Col interim governor.	
1673-1677	Hubert Hugo VOC Commander (former Dutch pirate in French service; no longer under Cape authority); proposal to make Mauritius a hub for slave trading and Dutch acquisition of parts of Madagascar;	Maroon attacks on Freeburghers ; minor slave revolt; in 1677 complot discovered to kill VOC personnel. Captured maroons in East Indies sent to Mauritius.

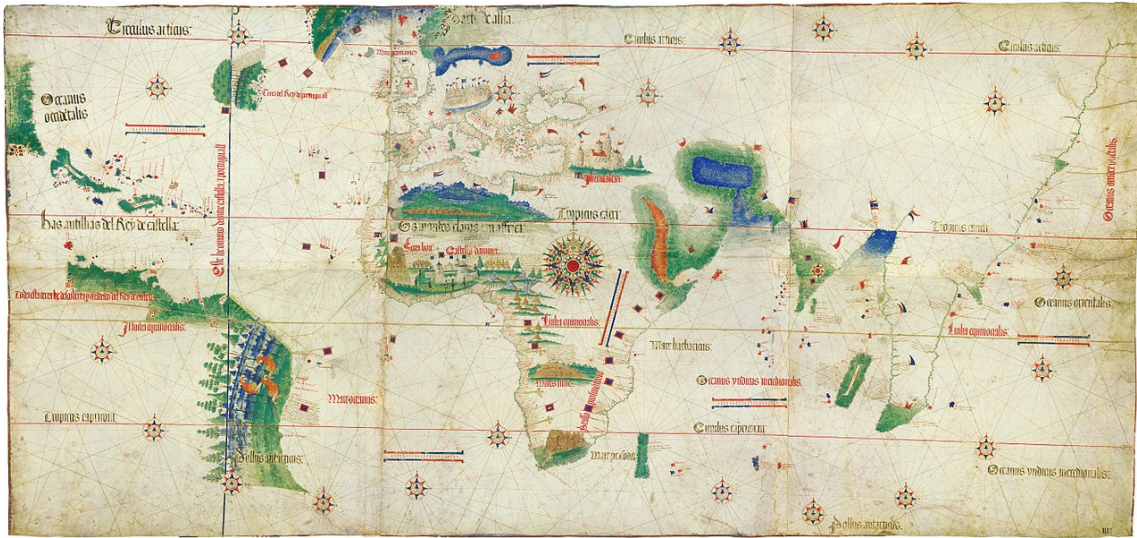
	agricultural expansion, including cattle; conflicts with expanding groups of Freeburghers.	
1677-1692	Isaac Johannes Lamotius VOC Governor, again under Cape authority; conflicts with Freeburghers; in 1692 arrested and on trial in Batavia for 'despotism'; in 1677 there were 32 Freeburgher families at Swarterivier (later Black River; south west), Vlakte van Noordwijk (later Flacq) and Noordwesthaven (later near Port Louis).	In 1679 there were 68 slaves, most from India and East Indies. Lamotius: "the forest is continually provided with male and female runaway slaves of the freemen who at the same time tempt thus away with them, some of the company slaves" (Chan Low 2012: 32). Maroons also called 'bush rangers'.
1687	Last time a living dodo was reported	
1690s	British pirates on the rise (earlier chased from the Caribbean)	
1692-1703	Roelof Diodati (also Deodati) VOC Governor; damaging cyclones (particularly in 1695), floods and epidemics. Fort ruined, buildings damaged and plantations destroyed.	Slave revolts (1695: four slaves set fire to the Lodge Fredrik Hendrik; arrested, tortured and killed) ; climate of fear and paranoia among Freeburgher; complaints about maroon threats; some Freeburgher join revolts; captured maroons in East Indies sent to Mauritius; became involved in instigating revolts.
1702; 1704	Visits of English Pirate John Bowen, with 200 sailors	
1703-1710	Abraham Momber van de Velde VOC Governor.	1703: slave uprising at Flacq; threats in the Northwest.  1706: 15 slaves set fire to the rebuilt Fort. Arrested, trialed, killed. They came from a great variety of backgrounds: Madagascar, East Africa, India, East Indies.
1706	Decision taken to abandon Mauritius ("useless and costly") .	
1707	Census taken on Mauritius: next to 48 VOC servants there were 196 people; 106 in Noordwesthaven in 16 households; 67 in	And the Census shows that there were 71 slaves: 47 in Noordwesthaven; 16 in Vlakte and 8 in Swarterivier. 40 slaves were owned

	Vlakte in 14 households and 28 in Swarterivier in 6 households. The Census showed: 32 men, 24 women, and 69 children of the Freeburghers. Together they had 472 animals.	by Freeburghers; only 18 Freeburgher families owned these slaves, so not all! The other slaves were Company property (Panyandee 2012: 21-22).
1710-1711	The VOC abandoned the island for the second time and evacuated all VOC personnel, Free Burghers and most of the slaves (together 174 persons evacuated); last pieces of ebony shipped.	Some maroons and deserted sailors (from VOC ships and from British ships) stayed behind.
1715	The French East India Company under Guillaume Dufresne d'Arseil took possession of the island as 'Ile de France' (followed by French settlement from 1721 onwards).	French 'hunt' of maroons; some captured and sent to Réunion.
1810	The British took over from the French and again used 'Mauritius' as the name for the island.	
1839		Slave emancipation.

Sources: Alpers 2003; Bonaparte 1890 (IX, p. 57, but many mistakes), based on Valentyn 1726; Moree 1998; Moree 2012a; Moree 2012b; Panyandee 2012; Chan Low 2012; Peerthum & Peerthum 2012; Republic of Mauritius 2013.

Figure 5: Cantino's map of 1602<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9c/Cantino\\_planisphere\\_%281502%29.jpg/1280px-Cantino\\_planisphere\\_%281502%29.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9c/Cantino_planisphere_%281502%29.jpg/1280px-Cantino_planisphere_%281502%29.jpg). Cantino's map shows three islands East of Madagascar, including "Dino Arobi", later: Mauritius. The evidence on this map, and wax with 'Arab' characters found in 1598 by the Warwyck expedition, near a shipwreck on Mauritius, have long suggested that Arab ships had visited Mauritius (long) before the Portuguese found the 'Mascareignes' or 'Mascarenes' islands: Mauritius, Réunion, and Rodrigues. In sources published by the Mauritian government (e.g., Republic of Mauritius, 2013), in school text books used in Mauritius (see Chan Low 2000), and on Wikipedia the suggestion is that Arabs 'discovered' the islands (some even indicate when: "in the 9th century") – some also add that Greeks and/or Phoenicians did so long before the Arabs did. Shawkat Toorawa (2000) and Robert Barnes (2000) show that these claims should be taken with a lot of caution, and might simply be untrue.



## A heritage of connections

The Dutch heritage about Mauritius can be found in archives and libraries, in museums, on the internet, in the landscape, and on postage stamps. In this section we will look at each of those.

### The heritage of written sources about the Dutch period on Mauritius

#### I: Dutch, South African and Indonesian sources

Primary material about the Dutch visits to and colonization of “T Eylandt Mauritius” can be found in the General State Archives in The Hague, the Archive of the Political Council at Cape Town, and – in the form of ‘dag registers’ of the VOC in Batavia - in Jakarta. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the publications of the ship’s journals were very popular, and that already started with the publication of Warwyck’s journal around 1600 in Dutch, English and German. In 1891-1893, in 1898-1902 and in 1903 Chijs, Colenbrander and Hullu published some of the ‘dag-registers’ from Batavia. Between 1938 and 1951 the Dutch Linschoten Vereeniging published all relevant materials of this ‘Tweede Schipvaart’ (see Keuning 1938-1951). A famous 17<sup>th</sup> century publication was Evertsz (1670) story about the shipwreck of the *Arnhem* near Mauritius (also see Stokram 1942, and 1993) , and the story of Willem Ysbrantsz Bontekoe’s trip to the East Indies (including his visit to Mauritius), published in 1650, became a very popular book (Bontekoe van Hoorn 1650, also see Hoogewerff 1952, and Bostoen, 1996). Around the same time Matelieff (1648) published his story about the voyage of Admiral De Jonge in 1605-1608. Coolhaas (1962) published a book about Pieter van den Broecke and how he found the wreck of Pieter Both’s ship in 1617. Warnsinck (1943) wrote about Van Spilbergen’s trip around the world, including his visit to Mauritius around the same time. Akveld and Houterman (1971) also published a study about the VOC ship *t Wapen van Amsterdam*, and Van Hoof (1994) and Moree (2001) about the ship of the *Gelderland*. A lot of material in the archives of The Hague is



still waiting to be studied (see Moree 1998 and Moree 2012a), but two major publications exist about these sources: Bruijn et al. (1979-1987) and Raben (1992). In 1896 Leibbrandt had published an overview of the materials in Cape Town, and in 1957, 1959, 1962 and 1973 Boëseken published some of those Cape Town materials (in Afrikaans). The South-African historian Sleight also made use of Cape Town archives in his publications of 1993 (in Afrikaans) and 2000 (in English).

During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century there was only limited attention for the Dutch history in Mauritius. Exceptions were publications by Calvinist minister Valentyn in 1726, by history professor Leupe (1854; also see figure 3) and a study by Heeringa (1895), that became influential internationally because it also had a French translation. In 1930 Stapel wrote an essay about the role of former pirate Hubert Hugo, and his role as Commander of Mauritius, and a bit later the Linschoten Vereeniging started with the publication of some of the archival sources, as we have seen. In 1931 Hoffmann's 1680 text was reissued (in German) about his travels in the years 1671-1676, including his visit to Mauritius. In 1944 Wijnaendts van Resandt published a study about Governor Diodati.

Towards the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Dutch landing on Mauritius suddenly there was a lot of attention in the Netherlands for what had happened 400 years ago. In 1991 Kouwenhoven published an article in a popular history journal in the Netherlands, and in 1998 about the excavations of Fort Frederik Hendrik. Van Wissen (1994) edited a volume about the dodo (see later). And in 1995 there was a first assessment of the history of slavery from Madagascar (Barendse, 1995). In preparation of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Netherlands Government asked Perry Moree, then working at the National Archives in The Hague, to write a history of Dutch Mauritius (1998, also see 2000, 2001, 2012a and 2012b; in 1998: 98-101 he gives a list of all Dutch ships visiting Mauritius in 1598-1638 and 1659-1664), and the International Institute of Asian Studies in Leiden and Amsterdam, together with the University of Mauritius in Réduit, organized a conference about 'Globalisation and the South-West Indian Ocean' in 1998. It was followed by a publication (Evers and Hookoomsing 2000), with Dutch contributions about Mauritius by Perry Moree, Robert Ross, Laetitia van den Heuvel and Paul van der Velde, and South African contributions from Daniel Sleight and Nigel Worden (see section IV for Mauritian contributions). In 2012 the Journal of Mauritian Studies published a special issue about 'Buitenpost Mauritius' (see section IV), and besides Moree (2012a and 2012b) also Harmsen published a contribution (about the image of Mauritius and the VOC during the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the Netherlands). Recently there was also some interest in the history of the Dutch involvement in slavery in the Indian Ocean, e.g., Vink (2003 and 2007), and there was a publication about an archaeological study (Floore and Jayasena; 2010).

## **II: French sources**

France was the second colonizer of Mauritius (1715/1721 – 1810). Already in the 17<sup>th</sup> century French sailors travelled in the area and published their travel journals. An example is Cauche (1651), who also wrote about Dutch slavery in Madagascar and to Mauritius. In 1713 Tavernier assessed the activities of the Dutch in Asia. In 1804 Bory de Saint-Vincent wrote about the island, followed by Milbert (1812), and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre in 1826. These sources were all used in an influential (but not always accurate) publication by Bonaparte in 1890 about the Dutch in Mauritius. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century only few French publications were published about the Dutch in Mauritius. In 1956 Lounon published about the French maroon hunt in 1714 after the Dutch had left the island. In 1984 Racault published about the failed attempt by French huguenots (under François Léguat, see Leguat de la Fougère 1721, published in London; Léguat & Racault 1984) to settle in Mauritius during Dutch rule, and in 1979 Gabrielle de Nettancourt published a contribution about Dutch Mauritius in a book that was published after a colloquium in Paris about Population Movements in the Indian Ocean area (in French). She mainly used archival sources. In 1989, Antoine Chelin published an extensive monograph about the history of Mauritius (published in Réunion). Finally, Mauritian historian Jocelyn Chan Low published his PhD dissertation in France in 1990, also using a lot of archival sources.

### **III: Sources from the UK and the USA**

Even before the English took control of Mauritius, in 1810, Charles Grant (1801) already published a book about the island. It was followed by a.o. Pridham in 1849, Oliver in 1891 (about Leguat and his unfortunate adventures), McMillan in 1914, and Ingram in 1931. These studies formed the basis for the way school children in Mauritius learned about the Dutch heritage, and in more recent times particularly the studies by Barnwell (1948) and Barnwell and Toussaint (1949) were very influential to picture the Dutch heritage in very negative terms (see Moree 1998 and Chan Low 2000). Barnwell later published a study about Mauritian place names (1956). Sharp (1968) studied the voyages of famous Dutch explorer Abel Tasman, including his visit to Mauritius. Selvon and Rivière published a historical dictionary about the island (1991), and in 2005 Selvon published a book about Mauritian history, published in Mauritius. Recent sources also include the (many) publications about the dodo – see later – and publications by Megan Vaughan about the creation of a creole slave island (a.o. 2005), adding to a growing interest in the history of slavery in the Indian Ocean area (e.g. Barker 1996; Scarr 1998; Ward 2009), although most of these studies mainly deal with the period after the Dutch left.

### **IV: Mauritian sources**

Only from 1998 onwards a lot of interest can be noticed among Mauritian scholars about the history of the Dutch period on the island, and these had a major focus on the slaves and maroons, and on anti-slavery resistance during the Dutch period on the island. The book published after the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the Dutch landing on Mauritius in 1598

(Evers and Hookoomsing, 2000) and a crucial publication about the Dutch period by the Journal of Mauritian Studies in 2012 gave a platform to Mauritian authors like Robert Barnes, (Laval) Jocelyn Chan Low<sup>19</sup>, Vinesh Hookoomsing, Sitradeven Panyandee, Sattteeanund and Satyendra Peerthum, France Staub, and Shawkat Toorawa. These two studies were preceded by Vijaya Teelock's explicit study about the Dutch period on the island (1998), and by a book written by Addison and Hazareesingh (1993). Only a few earlier publications exist about this period, written by Mauritian scholars, and published in Mauritius. A famous and very early one is Pitot (1905), and the various contributions by the Chief archivist of Mauritius, Auguste Toussaint are worth mentioning as well (e.g., 1949 – together with Barnwell; 1956 – together with Adolphe; 1971; 1972; 1974; and 1977, but most of it was published outside Mauritius; in London or Paris).

### **Public image, negative assessment and counter-narratives**

The Government of Mauritius is brief about the Dutch heritage. In a website for the general public it writes:

“In 1598, a Dutch squadron, under the orders of Admiral Wybrand Van Warwyck, landed at Grand Port and named the island "Mauritius", in honour of Prince Maurice Van Nassau, "Stathouder" of Holland. However, it was not until 1638 that there was a first attempt of Dutch settlement. It was from here that the famous Dutch navigator Tasman set out to discover the western part of Australia. The first Dutch settlement lasted only twenty years. Several attempts were subsequently made, but the settlements never developed enough to produce dividends and the Dutch finally left Mauritius in 1710. They are remembered for the introduction of sugar-cane, domestic animals and deer”<sup>20</sup>.

And the only illustration it adds is a drawing of a dodo, reproduced as figure 6 (also see the final part of this chapter).

Figure 6: the dodo as illustration of the Dutch period in the history of Mauritius<sup>21</sup>.



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<sup>19</sup> Also see: Chan Low 2004, about the debate of compensation for slavery experiences.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.govmu.org/English/ExploreMauritius/Pages/History.aspx#dutch>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.govmu.org/Style%20Library/MauritusImages/Content/his2.jpg>

It could be interesting to see the different national narratives on the history of Mauritius. A good attempt to get a grasp of the common sense understanding of a nation regarding the colonial past of Mauritius could be through studying Wikipedia. Hence, the different language sites of Wikipedia will be scrutinized, although the information about the Dutch history of Mauritius, available on Wikipedia, is limited. The English-language website<sup>22</sup> simply copies the information on the Mauritian Government website, but it adds a Dutch map of the (south east) Coast (figure 7), and a painting of Stadtholder Maurits (see figure 2 before).

Dutch-language Wikipedia site<sup>23</sup> has a bit more information, but that is still very limited. It mentions Warwijck's 'colonisation', and a reference to stadholder Maurits. Additionally it includes information about the dodo (called *walgvoel*) and its extinction, as well as the extinction of the giant tortoise and ebony wood. It mentions the building of Fort Frederik Hendrik, and the introduction of sugarcane by Simon van der Stel (with reference to its later importance for the island), but also of goats, monkeys, rats, dogs, and deer (adding that the island did not have any mammals, except bats). It mentions a cyclone in 1695 and suggests that this resulted in the economic collapse of the island and the lack of interest of the VOC to re-invest in the island. And it mentions the move of the Dutch (slaves are not at all mentioned) to Cape of Good Hope, and the colonization of the island by the French in 1721. As an illustration it adds an old map (Figure 8).

Figure 7: Map of Warwijck Harbour, "Z.O.Haven", later Vieux Grand Port<sup>24</sup>.

Figure 8: Map of Mauritius made by Leupe<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mauritius>, accessed 15/11/2017

<sup>23</sup> [https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mauritius\\_\(land\)](https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mauritius_(land)), accessed 15/11/2017

<sup>24</sup> [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/5b/Van\\_Keulen\\_-\\_De\\_Z.\\_O.\\_Haven\\_van\\_%27t\\_Eyland\\_Mauritius.jpg/800px-Van\\_Keulen\\_-\\_De\\_Z.\\_O.\\_Haven\\_van\\_%27t\\_Eyland\\_Mauritius.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/5b/Van_Keulen_-_De_Z._O._Haven_van_%27t_Eyland_Mauritius.jpg/800px-Van_Keulen_-_De_Z._O._Haven_van_%27t_Eyland_Mauritius.jpg): "Dutch map of a coast of Mauritius. The Dutch were the first to establish a permanent human settlement in Mauritius. Dutch colonists named it after Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange and the Stadtholder of the Dutch Republic". The Afrikaans version of Wikipedia also has this illustration and adds that the map was made in 1853.

<sup>25</sup> [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/21/AMH-2523-NA\\_Map\\_of\\_the\\_island\\_of\\_Mauritius.jpg/800px-AMH-2523-NA\\_Map\\_of\\_the\\_island\\_of\\_Mauritius.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/21/AMH-2523-NA_Map_of_the_island_of_Mauritius.jpg/800px-AMH-2523-NA_Map_of_the_island_of_Mauritius.jpg) (Leupe: Kaart van 't Eyland Mauritius; in: Isaak de Graaf - ATLAS OF MUTUAL HERITAGE).



The French Wikipedia website<sup>26</sup> does not even devote a full sentence to the Dutch period: “L’île demeura inhabitée jusqu’à l’établissement d’une colonie en 1638 par les Provinces-Unies des Pays-Bas, les Néerlandais la nommant en l’honneur de Maurice de Nassau. Elle fut abandonnée faute de passage de commerçants en 1710...”.

The German Wikipedia website is more elaborate, and adds that 1638 is the same year in which the French colonised the islands of Réunion and Rodrigues. And very interestingly it adds that the island had many [VOC] Chiefs, who had to deal with lots of problems, like cyclones, drought, pests, food shortages and diseases, and resulted in the decision to give up<sup>27</sup>.

Finally the Wikipedia site in Afrikaans adds that the island was left in 1709 because it was not successful enough as a refreshment station between Cape Town and Batavia<sup>28</sup>.

What we can note, is that ‘popularized history’ seems to be coloured by the perspective of the writers’ background, even in a ‘globalised medium’ like Wikipedia. It is even more true if we look at the way ‘knowledge about the past’ enters Mauritian school books, and hence the minds of children (and their teachers and parents). Jocelyn Chan Low shows (in 2000: 57-58) how the British and British/Mauritian publications by Ingrams (1931), Barnwell and Toussaint (1949), Toussaint (1974), and Addison and Hazareesingh (1993) contributed to the creation of a negative image of the Dutch and their Mauritian heritage (a kind of ‘victor’s history writing, belittling the ones that left or were pushed out). Moree (1998: 1) wrote: “it is hard to believe for someone who visits Mauritius...today that this paradisaical island was once the possession of a Dutch trading company. Neither the languages spoken on Mauritius – English, French, Creole and Hindu (sic) – nor the surviving colonial architecture- with no trace at all of Dutch buildings –

<sup>26</sup> [https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maurice\\_\(pays\)](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maurice_(pays))

<sup>27</sup> <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mauritius>: “Zahlreiche Gouverneure wurden als Oberhäupter der Insel eingesetzt, doch viele Belastungen und Nöte, wie Zyklone, Dürren, Schädlingsplagen, Nahrungsmangel und Krankheiten, forderten ihren Tribut und 1710 wurde Mauritius von den Niederländern schließlich aufgegeben”.

<sup>28</sup> <https://af.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mauritius>: “In 1638 het Nederland dit as buitepos van die VOC beset, maar in 1709 dit weer verlaat omdat dit net deels suksesvol as verversingspos benut kon word tussen Kaapstad en Batavia”.

seem to indicate any involvement of the island with the Netherlands. And yet it is indisputable that the Dutch had actually made their presence felt there in the past”. He goes on by showing how negative the opinion is of the Dutch in later popular history writing, not in the least because they were held responsible for the extinction of the dodo. And indeed, next to the ecological damage left behind, they were also pictured as people who took all the existing ebony trees, and destroyed the environment, who engaged in slavery and harsh treatment of slaves, and who “failed in everything they set out to do when they took possession of the island” (Moree, 1998: 2; referring to Barnwell and Toussaint, 1949).

It is only recently, in fact starting with the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary publications of the Dutch landing on Mauritius, that a more nuanced picture was painted. It is interesting to note that very different opinions can be found in the current literature about the decision of the Dutch VOC to leave Mauritius (in 1710). Some authors focus on the lack of relevance of a refreshment station after the successful establishment of Cape Town, others point at the fact that the ebony trees [the most important export from the island] had been exploited up to extinction [although it is interesting to read that Jacob Haafner during his visit to the Island in 1786-1787 found that “ebony .. and other sorts of wood are available in abundant quantities and are of an outstanding quality”; Van der Velde 2000: 123], or that Cape Town no longer needed the chalk that Mauritius had provided to build its castle and other VOC buildings (Sleigh 2000). Ross (2000) and Peerthum and Peerthum suggest that the Dutch could no longer cope with the slave and maroon resistance and threats. While it is also clear that the relative strength of the Dutch to cope with French and English competition, as well as with the increasing pirate menace, was waning, particularly after the 1672 war of the Netherlands with both France, England and some German states. Particularly the publications by Perry Moree (1998 and later), Jocelyn Chan Low (1990 and later) and Daniel Sleigh (1993 and later) provide counter-narratives to the negative images of most of the earlier publications, and they show that the Dutch presence on the island is still part of the ‘lived heritage’ of Mauritius today.

### **Physical remains, names, maps and drawings**

Of the Dutch presence in Mauritius not much is visible in the landscape of Mauritius. The ruins of Fort Frederik Hendrik near Vieux Grand Port are the exception<sup>29</sup>, and with it the name of Stadholder Frederik Hendrik (see figure 9-11).

Figure 9: Drawing of Fort Frederik Hendrik<sup>30</sup>; Figure 10: The ruins of Fort Frederik Hendrik<sup>31</sup> and Figure 11: Stadholder Frederik Hendrik on a postage stamp of Dutch colony Curaçao .

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<sup>29</sup> See Floore et al., 2011.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.philatelieamarine.fr/images/Mascareignes/landing400.jpg>





Old maps also play a major role in the heritage of Mauritius. The first maps with details about (parts of) the island were made by the Dutch, as already illustrated in figures 7 and 8. Figures 11 and 12 show other early maps, reproduced on postage stamps of Mauritius<sup>32</sup>.

Figure 11: Dutch map of 'T Eylandt Mauritius, 1670 and Figure 12: Van Keulen's map of Mauritius, c. 1700.



And some names on Mauritius (like the name of the Island itself of course) directly or indirectly refer to the Dutch period, directly as in the case of Pieter Both mountain (see figure 13), and indirectly as in the translation of earlier Dutch names Swarterivier in Black River or Noordwijkse Vlakte in Flacq<sup>33</sup>. Finally a lot of drawings were made during the Dutch period by travellers on

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.mauritiuseyclopedia.com/History/Images/FortFrederikHendrik.jpg> : "The vestiges of Fort Frederik Hendrik". "In May 1638, the Dutch built a square wooden fort with bastions and cannons at each corner in Grand Vieux Port.. This fort was garrisoned, at first, by a force of 25 Dutchmen under the command of the first governor: Cornelis Gooyer. The fort was finished on 29 August 1638. It served as their primary fort in the colony as well as their seat of administration. It is the first VOC (Dutch East India Company) fort in the eastern hemisphere and is particular in that it was built as a defense from the sea – all the other forts were primarily to defend the Dutch from the native inhabitants of the land. The Dutch, of course, were the first and original inhabitants of Mauritius. Today, this fort no longer stands, but its foundations are under the ground. The fort was attacked by escaped slaves and set on fire by slaves, on different occasions, and is thus a symbol of freedom fighting and active resistance by slave towards their "owners".

<sup>32</sup> [https://i1181.photobucket.com/albums/x424/nethryk/Volume%2015/Mauritius-865-DutchMap-1670-9-18-98Litho\\_zps0tmkvv1.jpg](https://i1181.photobucket.com/albums/x424/nethryk/Volume%2015/Mauritius-865-DutchMap-1670-9-18-98Litho_zps0tmkvv1.jpg), and <http://www.mauritius.org.uk/stamps15.jpg>. Map by Van Keulen c. 1700.

<sup>33</sup> Chan Low 2000:59 adds other examples, making use of earlier work by Barnwell (1956).

Dutch ships as illustrations in ‘ship travel journals’, and some of those have been reproduced in scientific texts (like Bonaparte 1890, Moree 1998, or in the special issue of the Journal of Mauritian Studies on ‘Buitenpost Mauritius’ in 2012), or on Mauritian postage stamps (see figure 14 and 15). Part of those drawings deal with the famous dodo bird, but we will deal with that at the end of this paper.

Figure 13: Pieter Both Mountain on two postage stamps of Mauritius<sup>34</sup>



Figures 14 and 15: reproductions of old drawings on postage stamps of Mauritius<sup>35</sup>



By the way, the landing place of Van Warwijck’s fleet was marked by a small monument, erected in 1948 (see figure 16, while the ship Maen that brought the first VOC commander, Pieter de Gooyer, appeared on a Mauritian stamp, see figure 17).

Figure 16: Monument for Warwijck’s arrival<sup>36</sup>, figure 17: Postage stamp of the Maen in 1638<sup>37</sup>, and figure 18: Map of Dutch settlements on Mauritius<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.postzegelblog.nl/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/zegels.jpg>; Herman Jacobs KNBF : Nieuwsbrief 52, augustus 2014.

<sup>35</sup> <http://kayatana.com/images/MAU1978-530A-s1-1.50-UM.jpg>: “Mauritius 1978 15c Historical Series. SG530A”, and <https://i.pinimg.com/564x/29/62/89/29628956d5d43ffd515176b6c95367bd.jpg>.

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.postzegelblog.nl/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/18.jpg> : “De inscriptie op de koperen plaat luidt als volgt: Hereabouts on 20th September 1598, Dutch Sailors under Wysbrand van Warwick, first landed





### Finally: the dodo images

In a very nice contribution to the book that was published after the '400<sup>th</sup> anniversary' conference, Laetitia van den Heuvel (2000), writes about the virtual reality of the dodo in the current iconography of Mauritius, and the fact that that extinct bird has become one of the most prominent icons of Mauritius. The dodo was alive when the Dutch arrived and extinct when they left, so it is obvious that the Dutch were blamed for its extinction. In scientific studies about Mauritius and its Dutch heritage by far the most cited studies are about the dodo! The most important recent ones are Cheke (1987), Van Wissen (1994), Staub (2000), Roberts and Solow (2003), Hume et al. (2004), Hume (2006), Cheke and Hume (2008/2010), Turvey and Cheke (2008), Hume(2012) and Quammen (2012). It is interesting to see that among the 54 people who have so far cited Perry Moree's 1998 study about Mauritius (one of the most cited non-dodo publications about the Dutch period in Mauritius)<sup>39</sup>, many publications deal with either the dodo, or with slavery.

The recent studies of biologists and ecologists no longer solely blame the Dutch for the extinction, but see it as a tragic but almost inevitable impact of the introduction of alien influences on an hitherto 'untouched' island. If we look at the material heritage of Mauritian postage stamps, which for a long time have been an important way of the (postal) authorities to showcase Mauritius (and still are for many stamp collectors), dodos dominate the 'Dutch

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and named this island Mauritius. This monument Was erected in commemoration by the Societe de l'Histoire de l'Île Maurice and unveiled on 20th September 1948".

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.philatelieamarine.fr/images/Mascareignes/maen.jpg>: "Dutch fluyt MAEN transports the mail of the governor of Mauritius, C.S. Goyer, with the directors of the East India Company in August 1638. The fluyt was the largest trading vessel in the 17th century, round-sterned, flat-bottomed, and a relatively narrow vessel".

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.mauritiuscyclopedia.com/History/Images/DutchMauritiusMap.jpg>. The map prominently shows Fort Frederik Hendrik, and indicates the location of the locations of Dutch Freeburghers on the island: Noordwesthaven (near current-day Port Louis), Swarterivier in the South West (currently Black River), and Noordwijkse Vlake (currently Flacq) in the northeast.

<sup>39</sup> See: google scholar:

[https://scholar.google.nl/scholar?hl=en&as\\_sdt=0%2C5&q=moree+1998+concise+history&dq=Moree+1998](https://scholar.google.nl/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=moree+1998+concise+history&dq=Moree+1998)

heritage on stamps' in Mauritius. The combined figure 19 shows the evidence on Mauritian stamps, including the coat of arms of Mauritius, and a coin which includes the dodo! The dodo became an emblem of the extinction of animals, or as Turvey and Cheke (2008) call it: "an extinction icon". Hence, some foreign countries also copied pictures of the dodo on their postage stamps (see figure 20 for examples), but unfortunately not the Netherlands. Mauritius features once on a Dutch stamp, but that is because of a Mauritian postage stamp that became one of the most iconic images of the world's philatelic heritage: see Figure 21.

Figure 19: dodos on Mauritian postage stamps<sup>40</sup>



<sup>40</sup> <http://www.pibburns.com/cryptost/maur324.jpg>; [http://www.dodo.blog.br/wp-content/uploads/2006/06/stamp\\_Mauiitius\\_1992.jpg](http://www.dodo.blog.br/wp-content/uploads/2006/06/stamp_Mauiitius_1992.jpg); <https://i.pinimg.com/474x/60/4d/1b/604d1b381b22993812accd7eae92b2eb--stamp-collecting-mauritius.jpg>; <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/b9/01/ef/b901ef84f794498c138ea079e6060356.jpg>; <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/564x/7d/8f/c7/7d8fc78d20b53f6ea880d27640fedc0b.jpg>; <http://www.pibburns.com/cryptost/maur844.jpg>; <http://www.postzegelblog.nl/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/dodo-2.jpg>; <https://i.colnect.net/f/760/737/Dodo-Raphus-cucullatus.jpg>; <https://i.colnect.net/f/760/738/Dodo-Raphus-cucullatus.jpg>; <https://i.ebayimg.com/images/g/dyKAAOSwJa1Zt8GX/s-l1600.jpg>

Figure 20: Examples of the dodo on postage stamps outside Mauritius<sup>41</sup>



Figure 21: Mauritius on a postage stamp of the Netherlands<sup>42</sup>.



## Conclusion

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mauritian Independence will probably add another wave of re-interpretations of its history to the various (and conflicting) repertoires that we have described in this chapter, just like the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Dutch landing (see figure 22) has done some twenty years ago. One thing that is clear, though, is that a lot more can be discovered in the hidden treasures of the various archives that can shed additional and maybe even new light on the Dutch-Mauritian heritage. With the available technology of today and with Mauritius one of the richest countries in Africa, and the Netherlands one of the richest in the world, it must be possible to invest more in making the existing archival heritage available online, and in ways that many more people could use it than the few specialists who have done that before.

Figure 22: 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dutch landing on Mauritius on a Mauritian festive postal sheet<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.pibburns.com/cryptost/cuba1914.jpg>;

<https://i.pinimg.com/736x/28/69/7e/28697e4be4e372d1a81ad63416ecb340--mozambique-postal.jpg> ;

<https://i.pinimg.com/736x/02/3b/04/023b041d832e3c7049504176e8189c34--wild-turkey-book-jacket.jpg>

<sup>42</sup> <https://i.pinimg.com/736x/f6/7d/6a/f67d6a88dc0a06470c391ebaba0a4eab--mauritius-netherlands.jpg> : “A stamp-on-stamp - a Netherlands 1995 80c showing the Blue Mauritius”.

<sup>43</sup> <https://i.ebayimg.com/images/g/f30AAOSwk1haCLv0/s-l1600.jpg>





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