‘FOR THE PEACE AND WELL-BEING OF THE COUNTRY’: INTERCULTURAL MEDIATORS AND DUTCH-INDIAN RELATIONS IN NEW NETHERLAND AND DUTCH BRAZIL, 1600-1664

A Dissertation

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by

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Scholars have recently argued that New Netherland should be studied as an integral part of the Atlantic World. One important aspect that has been largely neglected in this wider geographical approach is that of Dutch interactions with native peoples. This dissertation addresses this issue by comparing Dutch-Indian relations in New Netherland and Dutch Brazil. I use intercultural mediators as a tool to analyze Dutch-native relations in the two Dutch American colonies. Because mediators frequently crossed cultural boundaries as interpreters, diplomats, and negotiators, they are fascinating characters for scholars studying interactions between Indians and colonists.

In comparing mediators in New Netherland with those in Dutch Brazil, this dissertation demonstrates that local contexts played an important role in shaping cross-cultural interactions in each colony. In Brazil, the Dutch struggle against Portuguese colonists primarily determined Dutch-Indian relations. Both the Dutch West India Company and the various Tupi and Tarairiu peoples of northeastern Brazil needed each other as allies against the Portuguese. In New Netherland the situation was different...
because there was less fear of a European enemy until the rise of English aggression in the 1650s. In contrast to Brazil, Indians and colonists in New Netherland were brought in close and frequent contact by an informal frontier exchange economy. Despite their different responses to the Dutch, the native peoples in Brazil and New Netherland shared the goal of maintaining independence from their Dutch allies and trading partners.

My comparative analysis also complicates commonly held views of Dutch attitudes toward Native Americans. Contrary to traditional assertions that depict the Dutch as solely driven by material exchange, this dissertation shows that Dutch-native interactions in the Atlantic world were also shaped by religious and imperial motives. Finally, this study of mediators in two different colonies demonstrates that the go-betweens did not bring the Indians and Dutch colonists closer together. Although Dutch and Indian negotiators often crossed cultural boundaries to maintain alliances or to prevent bloodshed, they did not create a middle ground of shared symbols and practices. By taking a comparative perspective this dissertation reveals the complexities of Dutch-Indian relations in the Atlantic world.
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always reminded me that there was life beyond the dissertation. The dissertation is dedicated to *het kleintje*.

Finally, this dissertation reflects my own research and writing. Any errors and flaws are mine.
### ABBREVIATIONS USED IN FOOTNOTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACA</td>
<td>Archive Classis Amsterdam</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHM</td>
<td><em>de Halve Maen: Magazine of the Dutch Colonial Period in America</em> (serial publication)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNA</td>
<td>National Archives of the Netherlands, The Hague, The Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>DN</td>
<td><em>Dagelijkse Notulen</em> (Daily Minutes) of the Political Council in Recife, Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAA</td>
<td>Gemeente Archief Amsterdam (Amsterdam City Archive)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LPB</td>
<td>Letters and Papers from Brazil, 1630-1654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LV</td>
<td>Linschoten-Vereeniging (serial publication)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Notarial Archive of the Amsterdam City Archive</td>
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<tr>
<td>OWIC</td>
<td>Archive of the Old West India Company (1621-1674)</td>
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WMQ: The William and Mary Quarterly: A Magazine of Early American History and Culture, Third Series (serial publication)


Itinerario: Itinerario: European Journal of Overseas History (serial publication)


Zegenrijk Gewest: Jaap Jacobs, Een zegenrijk gewest: Nieuw-Nederland in de zeventiende eeuw Cultuurgeschiedenis van de Republiek in de 17e eeuw (Amsterdam: Prometheus-Bert Bakker, 1999)


INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of students of the Dutch in colonial North America have recently taken an Atlantic perspective as a framework for analysis. These American and European scholars have been dissatisfied with the anachronistic and parochial interpretation of New Netherland as a short-lived and unsuccessful precursor to what would later become the Anglo-American colonies, and eventually, states, of New York, New Jersey, and Delaware. As a result, they have persuasively argued that New Netherland should be studied as an intrinsic part of the Atlantic World. According to this approach, the Atlantic World closely connected New Netherland with Europe, the Americas, and West Africa during the seventeenth century through patterns of trade, migration, and settlement.¹

This Atlantic angle has provided historians with many new and fresh insights into the history of New Netherland. A considerable number of scholars have used an Atlantic framework to reveal the economic, political, and cultural similarities and differences between New Netherland and the Dutch Republic in Europe. These “transplantation” studies have convincingly argued that many Dutch political, judicial, and cultural institutions and practices were replicated in New Netherland and continued to exist after the English conquests of 1664 and 1674. Other scholars have worked to integrate New Netherland more fully into our understanding of the Atlantic World by taking the perspective of the West India Company (WIC), the joint-stock company that was chartered by the Dutch States-General in 1621 to deploy colonial activities in the Atlantic basin. By comparing New Netherland with other WIC possessions during the seventeenth century, this line of scholarship has persuasively shown that the Company considered the sugar colony of Brazil, the trade entrepots in the Caribbean, and the gold and slaving stations in West Africa much more important than the unprofitable settlement colony of New Netherland.


2 In August 1664, an English naval squadron under Richard Nicolls conquered New Netherland. During the third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-1674), a Dutch naval force captured English New York in August 1673. After a little over a year, in November 1674, the colony was formally surrendered again to the English.

One important aspect of New Netherland history that has been largely neglected in this Atlantic-centered approach is that of intercultural relations. Significantly, studies of native-Dutch contacts in New Netherland have experienced considerable growth and sophistication over the past few decades. After a groundbreaking study of native-Dutch interactions in New Netherland by Allen Trelease in 1960, a new generation of scholars adopted ethnohistorical perspectives to describe cross-cultural relations from the natives’ perspectives. Several ethnohistorians even contrasted interethnic encounters with those in

New France and English North America to gain a comprehensive view of Indian-European relations in Northeastern North America during the seventeenth century.⁴

However, in a recent essay, anthropologist William A. Starna argued that this ethnohistorical scholarship of Indian-Dutch interactions has led to an unfortunate consensus. Starna wonders,

how many more times will historians conclude that the Dutch expressed a fundamental lack of curiosity toward their Indian neighbors; that they apparently were tolerant of the natives, and in addition, made no serious attempt to Christianize them; that their inquisitiveness did not reach much beyond their commercial affairs; and that, through it all, the Dutch diligently maintained a pronounced social distance from the wilden [the early modern Dutch word for “savages”, MM] who surrounded them. There is surprisingly little disagreement among students of Indian-Dutch relations about these representations.⁵


Although Starna suggests that scholars need to look even more closely at the native perspectives to break out of the consensus, I argue that the commonly held views about Dutch-Indian interactions in New Netherland can better be complicated by comparing intercultural relations in Dutch North America with those in other parts of the Dutch Atlantic. A comparative Atlantic perspective of Dutch-Indian encounters enables us to assess whether cross-cultural relations in New Netherland were similar or different from other frontiers, or zones of cultural interactions, in the Dutch Atlantic. Three short studies have already been published which demonstrated the usefulness of integrating Dutch-native interactions in New Netherland with those in other parts of the overseas Dutch world. However, these essays primarily surveyed the possibilities of a comparative perspective and were largely based on secondary sources.6

This dissertation is a comparative study of Dutch-Indian relations in New Netherland and Dutch Brazil. I have selected the Dutch colony in northeastern Brazil for several reasons. First, in both colonies the Dutch were in sustained contact with Indian peoples during approximately the same period. Dutch-Indian relations in New Netherland lasted from 1609 to 1664 and intercultural contacts in Dutch Brazil took place from the

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1620s to 1654. Second, both colonies were an integral part of the WIC’s Atlantic empire and shared similar Dutch political and judicial institutions. Third, both colonies were relatively short lived. The WIC initially captured northeastern Brazil from the Portuguese in the early 1630s, but the Portuguese forced it out in 1654. As is commonly known, the English conquered New Netherland in 1664. Finally, both colonies have left a considerable number of archival and printed sources that allow for a useful comparative study of intercultural relations.

While there are many themes or issues possible for a comparative study of Indian-Dutch relations in the two colonies, in this dissertation I use the roles of intercultural mediators as a way to analyze cross-cultural relations in New Netherland and Dutch Brazil. Because these individuals frequently crossed cultural boundaries as interpreters, diplomats, and negotiators, they are fascinating characters for scholars studying interactions between native peoples and European colonists. In the recent historiography there have been basically two different interpretations about the role of intercultural mediators in intercultural relations.


8 The best study of Dutch Brazil in English is still Charles Boxer’s *Dutch in Brazil*. For archival sources about the two colonies, see Ernst van den Boogaart, “The Archive of the First West India Company (W.I.C.), 1621-1674,” *Itinerario* 4, no. 2 (1980): 59-61.
The first one argues that intercultural mediators sometimes successfully bridged Native American and European cultures. According to this interpretation, the individuals who served colonial officials as interpreters and negotiators became people in between who brought radically different cultures closer together. Some of the mediators even created new identities by blending Indian and European cultural practices. Historian Margaret Connell Szasz, who edited a collection of biographical studies of intercultural brokers in North America, concluded that “intermediaries were, by definition, receptive to other cultural worlds, and inherent in this receptivity was the belief that those cultures offered something of value.”

The second interpretation of intercultural mediators is more pessimistic. According to this interpretation, negotiators were never sincerely interested in bringing the two cultures together. Instead, mediators only accommodated to native customs and practices in order to further their own goals and that of their employers. In his innovative recent study about Indian and colonial diplomats and interpreters in eighteenth century Pennsylvania, historian James H. Merrell persuasively demonstrated that negotiators, “were not, it turns out, denizens of some debatable land between native and newcomer; almost without exception, they were firmly anchored on one side of the cultural divide.”

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Although colonial mediators closely cooperated with their native counterparts to preserve intercultural peace, neither side was able and willing to shed its prejudices and negative feelings about the other.10

While there has been one insightful study of the development of linguistic communication between Indians and Europeans in New Netherland, there has not yet been a systematic study of intercultural mediators in the colony of New Netherland. Ironically, there have been several publications about Dutch and Indian cultural brokers in colonial New York after 1664. But by beginning their studies after the English conquest of New Netherland, these scholars unfortunately suggested that intercultural mediators in the Dutch colony were not an important topic for analysis. The previously mentioned William Starna has even argued that there were no negotiators in New Netherland “because none turn up in the records until the end of the Dutch period.” In this dissertation I show that this statement is incorrect. As we will see, there were many informal and official mediators in New Netherland who managed intercultural relations.11


Likewise, no collective study has been made about the intercultural mediators in Dutch Brazil. Several Dutch and Brazilian historians have discussed the handful of European individuals who served the WIC as mediators to the Tarairius, a native people who were feared by both the Portuguese and the Dutch for their nomadic raids and cannibalistic practices. However, no studies have yet been made of the Dutch and Indian mediators who managed diplomatic relations between the WIC and its allies among the Tupi-speaking Indian peoples.\footnote{12}

This dissertation makes several contributions to recent scholarship. First, by comparing intercultural mediators in New Netherland with those in Dutch Brazil, this study highlights the similarities and differences in Indian-Dutch interactions in the early modern Atlantic World. The comparative perspective emphasizes the importance of the context of settlement in each colony. While New Netherland and Dutch Brazil were both relatively short-lived enterprises of the same West India Company, the contexts of the two colonies’ Indian relations were different in fundamental ways. The Dutch struggle against Portugal and its Indian and Afro-Brazilian allies, the heavy labor demands of the sugar industry, and the deep roots of Portuguese colonization in Brazil all affected Indian relations in ways that have no convincing counterparts in the WIC colony in North

America. In New Netherland, there was no cash crop such as sugar, there was relatively less fear of a European enemy until the rise of English aggression in the 1650s, and European settlement remained relatively sparse.

At the same time, the comparative perspective reveals important similarities and differences in the native responses to Dutch colonialism. In addition to clear cultural and linguistic differences, perhaps the most significant distinction was that the Brazilian Indians had already been in extensive contact with Europeans by the time of the WIC invasion of 1630. During the sixteenth century, Portuguese colonists and Catholic missionaries had integrated large numbers of Tupi-speaking Indians of coastal Brazil into colonial society as forced laborers and Christian converts. In contrast, most of the Algonquian- and Iroquoian-speaking peoples of mid-Atlantic North America had not yet been in direct contact with Europeans when Dutch navigators and traders arrived in the Hudson Valley in the 1600s. While the Brazilian Indian peoples were primarily interested in establishing a military alliance with the Dutch, the indigenous nations in mid-Atlantic North America were for the most part interested in a trade relationship with the Dutch. Despite these differences in motives, the various indigenous peoples attempted to use the Dutch for their own political, religious, and economic advantages.

Second, my dissertation adds to the growing body of literature that complicates our understanding of Dutch colonization in the Americas. As William Starna pointed out, one of the commonly held scholarly views about the Dutch in New Netherland is that they were primarily concerned with commercial motives and not with the evangelization of Native Americans. By comparing Dutch-Indian relations in New Netherland and Dutch Brazil I show that Dutch Reformed ministers were extensively involved in
programs to convert the Indian peoples in both colonies. However, because many Calvinist ministers were attracted to Brazil to combat the Catholic Church, the Dutch Reformed missionary program in New Netherland remained relatively small compared to Dutch Brazil. Another stereotypical view of the Dutch is their supposed reluctance to establish intimate relations with indigenous women. As this study of intercultural mediators in Dutch Brazil and New Netherland shows, Dutch colonists and WIC employees frequently maintained liaisons with native women.  

Third, this study contributes to recent scholarship on intercultural mediators. It supports recent critiques of the “cultural broker” approach by including not only a discussion of the official mediators who served WIC authorities and native communities, but also by incorporating those Indians and Dutch colonists who frequently interacted on an informal basis. Although official mediators largely managed intercultural relations in Dutch Brazil, in New Netherland both official mediators and common Indians and colonists were in frequent contact. Despite this differentiation between official and unofficial mediators, almost all cultural brokers in New Netherland and Dutch Brazil ultimately remained loyal to their own cultures. For all their close relations and their skills in crossing cultural boundaries, intercultural mediators were not “people in between” who blended Indian and Dutch cultures. My dissertation supports James

Merrell’s argument that negotiators paradoxically exemplified the strong cultural divide separating “Indians” from “colonists” in the Americas.14

Chapter one contextualizes intercultural relations in Dutch Brazil and New Netherland. It proceeds with a discussion of the first strategies of intercultural communication in both colonies. The first linguistic strategy used by the Dutch was sign language. However, signs and gestures were often vague and open to different interpretations. The second strategy used by the Dutch concerned the deployment of linguistic middlemen such as Afro-Atlantic Creoles and a Sephardic Jew. Although these persons were highly valued by the Dutch for their specialized linguistic and cross-cultural skills, they were simultaneously distrusted.

Chapter two discusses Dutch attempts to train Indians as mediators in the Dutch Republic. This was a controversial yet common practice used by European colonial powers during the era of overseas exploration. In New Netherland, the Dutch attempt to educate natives as useful translators and mediators failed because the Indians refused to cooperate once they returned to their kinsmen in North America. As a result, the Dutch were forced to adapt to the languages and diplomatic customs of the Indians in order to maintain cross-cultural relations. In contrast to New Netherland, some Brazilian Indians actively supported the Dutch program to educate them as interpreters. A faction of the Tupi-speaking Potiguar peoples from northeastern Brazil was so eager to make an alliance with the Dutch that they persuaded a visiting WIC fleet to take them to the

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United Provinces. By traveling to the Dutch Republic, these Potiguars strengthened an anti-Portuguese alliance with their new Dutch allies.

Chapter three follows the careers of the two most prominent Tupi-Potiguar leaders who received an education as mediators in the United Provinces. While most Indians taken to Europe quickly succumbed to deadly diseases or failed to become reliable mediators, Pieter Poty and Antonio Paraupaba emerged as influential go-betweens in Dutch Brazil. This chapter argues that Poty and Paraupaba exploited their status as loyal negotiators to further the autonomy of their kinsmen in Dutch Brazil.

Chapter four provides a collective social portrait of those European officials, soldiers, Protestant missionaries, and colonists who served as WIC mediators among the Tupis and Tarairius of Dutch Brazil. Despite the considerable social differences among these categories of mediators, almost all shared selfish and practical views of the Indians. At the same time, one prominent WIC official and several Dutch Reformed ministers displayed some sincere humanitarian interest in the native allies of the Dutch. However, even they primarily did so to further the integration of the Brazilian Indians into the Dutch colonial order as obedient Christian farmers.

Chapter five focuses on the contradictions of the everyday exchanges between colonists and Indians in New Netherland. In the absence of a cash crop and because the WIC spent most of its resources on the conquest of Brazil, New Netherland remained a relatively marginal colony. Many colonists were therefore dependent for survival upon their native neighbors for foodstuffs and beaver furs, the latter of which were exported to the Republic. Likewise, the Algonquian- and Iroquoian-speaking peoples of mid-Atlantic North America were in frequent contact with the Dutch in order to obtain valuable trade
goods such as steel tools, guns, textiles, and liquor. Although this informal frontier exchange economy brought colonists and Indians in close and even intimate contact, the two sides also maintained a strong cultural distance from each other.

Chapter six inquires into the effectiveness of the official mediators employed by both the WIC and the Indian peoples to maintain intercultural peace in New Netherland. After having provided a social overview of the official Indian, Dutch, and Dutch-Indian mediators, this chapter analyzes the role of the intercultural diplomats through four case studies. The first involves the role of official mediators in the Indian-Dutch conflict known as Kieft’s War (1640-1645). The second and third investigate the role of mediators in the two Esopus Wars (1659-1660, 1663-1664). The final case study discusses the role of those mediating Mohawk-Dutch relations in the Upper Hudson Valley. While the Indian and Dutch mediators often crossed cultural boundaries to prevent Dutch-Indian conflicts, they primarily did so for practical purposes and not out of any desire to promote a better understanding between the two cultures.

A brief conclusion provides a summary of the findings and emphasizes the similarities and differences between intercultural mediators in New Netherland and Dutch Brazil.

Finally, some notes on nomenclature. All dates taken from manuscript and published primary sources are as they appear in the documents. Unlike the English, the Dutch consistently used the New Style calendar during the early modern period. Throughout the dissertation I use the terms “intercultural mediators,” “cultural brokers,” “negotiators,” “interpreters,” and “go-betweens” interchangeably to designate those individuals who managed Indian-Dutch relations in official or unofficial ways.
I use the English translation of the contemporary name *Nieu Nederlant* (“New Netherland”) for the Dutch colony in mid-Atlantic North America. WIC officials simply used the term “Brazil” whenever they were referring to the colony in Brazil. However, in order to avoid confusion with the parts of Brazil that were controlled by the Portuguese, I use the term “Dutch Brazil.” Some historians have cautioned against using “Dutch Brazil” because the Dutch presence in Brazil was relatively short-lived. Although I agree with the assertion that the Dutch hold on Brazil was tenuous and heavily contested by the Portuguese, I nonetheless use the label “Dutch Brazil” in the dissertation for the geographic areas in northeastern Brazil in which the WIC had established a presence in the form of forts or outposts.  

I employ the names “Indians,” “native peoples,” and “Native Americans,” interchangeably to denote the indigenous peoples of North and South America. The WIC and Dutch colonists used a large variety of terms to describe their native neighbors in New Netherland and Dutch Brazil. The Dutch referred to the indigenous polities as *volkeren* (“peoples”) or *naties* (“nations”). The meaning of the word “naties” did not necessarily have political or territorial connotations in early modern Dutch. Instead, the word “nation” indicated a community of people who were closely connected with each other through familial, religious, commercial, linguistic, or social ties. For example, the Dutch referred to the (Portuguese-speaking) Sephardic Jewish community in Amsterdam as the “Portuguese Nation.” Likewise, WIC officials in Dutch Brazil and New Netherland viewed the native peoples as “nations.” For instance, in February 1654, the WIC

15 For instance, Charles Boxer’s study of the Dutch presence in Brazil is called “The Dutch in Brazil” (my emphasis) and not “Dutch Brazil.” I thank Ernst van den Boogaart for pointing this out to me.
government of New Netherland was “advised of the scarcity of powder and lead among the Mohawk nation.” In the same way, the Dutch called the Brazilian Indians who were allied with the WIC the “Brazilian nation.”16

In addition to these similarities, there were considerable differences in the names that the Dutch used to describe the native peoples in New Netherland and Dutch Brazil. The different names for Indians in both colonies reflected the different contexts of European settlement in each colony. In Brazil, the Dutch generally referred to the Tupi-speaking Indian peoples who lived in Jesuit mission villages as “Brazilians” to differentiate them from native peoples who had not been concentrated in Catholic missions. As a result, I use the name “Brazilians” in conjunction with the commonly accepted ethnic name “Tupis” when describing the natives who had lived in mission villages before the WIC invasion. The Dutch called Indians who had not yet been brought under control by the Portuguese and the Jesuits “Tapuyas”. This was originally a Tupi name for all Indian peoples who were not linguistically and politically associated with the Tupis. Like the Portuguese, the Dutch often used the term “Tapuyas” to denote any hostile natives. However, one of the “Tapuya” peoples, the “Tarairius,” became military allies of the WIC. As Rebecca Parker Brienen has recently noted, the labels “Brazilians”

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and “Tapuyas” were an artificial “contrast between the colonized and the savage, a
seventeenth-century Brazilian version of Columbus’ distinction between the Arawak and
the Carib.”

In New Netherland, the Dutch encountered Algonquian- and Iroquoian-speaking
indigenous peoples who had not yet had much direct contact with Europeans. As a result,
the Dutch generally used the neutral terms “Indianen” (Indians), and “naturellen”
natives) for these peoples. In addition, the Dutch in New Netherland used the more
ambiguous term “wilden,” which can best be translated as “uncivilized people(s).”
Clearly, this name held negative connotations because it implied that the Indians were
less civilized than the Dutch. Like other early modern Europeans, the Dutch viewed non-
Europeans as culturally deficient because they were not Christian and had attitudes
toward gender, law, and political organization that were radically different from
Europeans. Unfortunately, as Susan Shaw has pointed out, the term “wilden” has been
translated differently over the years. In the nineteenth century, most translators of the
Dutch documents dealing with New Netherland used the strongly derogatory English
term “savages” for “wilden”. However, A.J.F. van Laer and Charles T. Gehring, the two
most reliable twentieth century translators of New Netherland manuscripts, have
generally translated “wilden” as “Indians.” Because it would be too time-consuming to

17 Rebecca Parker Brienen, “Art and Natural History at a Colonial Court: Albert Eckhout
and Georg Marcgraf in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Brazil” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern
University, 2002), 182 (quotation). For the names “Tapuya” and “Tarairiu”, see Robert H.
Lowie’s essays in: J.H. Steward, ed. Handbook of South American Indians, Volume 1: The
Marginal Tribes (Smithsonian Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 143) (Washington, D.C.:
Smithsonian Institution, 1946): 553-556 (Tapuya), and 563-566 (Tarairiu).
find out which term was originally used in every translated Dutch document, I have used the terms “Indians,” “natives,” and “wilden” interchangeably in my dissertation.\textsuperscript{18}

Finally, this dissertation relies primarily on a combination of archival and published primary sources found in the United States and the Netherlands. All the manuscript sources used are in the early modern Dutch language that differs considerably from contemporary Dutch. Direct quotations in the dissertation from these Dutch sources are my own translations. These translations should not be considered definite but only as my interpretation. As most scholars who have worked with early modern Dutch language documents can attest to, the transcribing and translating of these sources into English is often very difficult and time-consuming. All translations into English from other languages are also my own, unless stated otherwise.

CHAPTER 1

SIGN LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTIC MIDDLEMEN: THE DUTCH SEARCH FOR TRUSTWORTHY MEDIATORS, 1600-1635

When the Dutch first came into contact with the native peoples of northeastern Brazil and mid-Atlantic North America during the early 1600s, all participants were already familiar with various forms of cross-cultural communication. Instead of being an encounter between peoples who were unfamiliar with interacting with other cultures, the earliest forms of Dutch-native communication were shaped by existing strategies of contact employed by each group. As a result, this phase of early encounters should be seen not as an era of “first contact” between Europeans and previously isolated indigenous peoples, but instead as a period in which all sides built and elaborated upon proven methods of inter-cultural communication. At the same time, the degree of prior knowledge with cross-cultural contacts varied per group and region. Dutch navigators and traders were already interacting with other Europeans as well as non-Europeans before establishing initial contact with the various Native American peoples in Brazil and North America. Moreover, while the coastal Brazilian Indian peoples had been in extensive contact with Portuguese and also French colonists before establishing relations with the Dutch in the early 1600s, the indigenous populations of the mid-Atlantic region
of North America remained relatively isolated from interactions with Europeans until the arrival of the Dutch during the first decade of the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{19}

In addition, it is important to emphasize that intercultural communication did not automatically take away notions of distrust and ethnocentric opinions about foreigners. Lacking a strong centralized government, bureaucracy, and law-enforcement organization, the Dutch Republic of the seven United Provinces was a patchwork of towns and provinces, each of which fiercely protected its traditional political rights dating back to the early Middle Ages. Moreover, since travel remained hazardous and time-consuming, most people throughout the Republic spent time with neighbors and family who lived nearby and who spoke the same dialect. In this cultural climate, where identity was based upon local and regional affiliation, foreigners who spoke strange tongues were naturally viewed with suspicion. For instance, when Flemish and Brabant migrants settled in the province of Holland during the 1590s and 1600s they were greatly distrusted as outsiders who had different manners and spoke with a strange accent. Although discrimination of Flemish and Brabant refugees quickly subsided in the face of growing economic prosperity, the social tensions between natives and newcomers in Holland showed that even people sharing a similar language and cultural practices viewed one another with suspicion.\textsuperscript{20}


\textsuperscript{20} On the problems of traveling in early modern Europe, see for instance Holger Th. Gräf and Ralf Pröve, \textit{Wege ins Ungewisse: Eine Kulturgeschichte des Reisens, 1500-1800} (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1997). For the tensions between Flemish and Brabant newcomers and natives of Holland and Zeeland, see Harald Hendrix, “Vreemd volk in Holland: Xenofobie en xenofilie in historisch perspectief,” in: Harald Hendrix and Ton Hoenselaars, eds., \textit{Vreemd volk:}
It is therefore not surprising that when the Dutch interacted with European neighbors and non-European peoples, communication was even more hampered by distrust. For instance, novice Dutch merchants traveling to Italy were warned by experienced travelers to be suspicious of Italians because the latter were known for their knife wielding and stealing. Although it is difficult to assess the actual impact of these stereotypes, recent research has shown that the images of Southern Europeans as haughty people wearing expensive clothing and Germans as poor and lazy folks were widespread among Dutch travelers. For instance, when Dutch merchants hired experienced Basque whalers for expeditions to the Northern Atlantic in the 1610s, relations aboard were often marred by mutual distrust between the Catholic Basques and the predominantly Protestant Dutch sailors.21

While the Dutch and their European neighbors shared at least similar beliefs about civilization, such as the importance of a hierarchical social order, Christianity, and a particular definition of sex and gender roles, human societies in Asia, Africa, and the Americas were often organized around entirely different cultural practices. Even when Dutch traders interacted with individuals of mixed European and native descent that spoke one or more European languages, cross-cultural communication remained

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negatively influenced by ethnic stereotypes and mistrust on the part of the Dutch. When
Dierick Ruijters, a navigator and long-distance trader from the maritime province of
Zeeland, published a sailing manual of the southern Atlantic in 1624, he urged fellow
Dutchmen to be cautious of creole interpreters along the West African coast. Ruijters
specifically singled out one Francisco Fernandes, a man of Portuguese-African descent
who lived in what is now Sierra Leone. Although Mendes was “a trustworthy Negro,”
who was very knowledgeable about the geography and the native peoples of the local
coast, Ruijters also warned that “his trustfulness does not mean much because of his
people’s sin of lustiness; as a result they can not be trusted.”22

Like the Dutch, the native peoples of northeastern Brazil and mid-Atlantic North
America were also wary of strangers who spoke different languages and performed
different cultural practices. The various indigenous polities of Brazil and North America
were politically decentralized communities in which family ties and kinship bonds were
the primary forms of social organization. Individuals who did not have kinship ties to
these small societies were automatically viewed as strangers who could be potentially
harmful to the community. The Indians’ fear and skepticism of strangers was
dramatically expressed by the names that the native peoples gave to themselves and to
outsiders. In mid-Atlantic North America, the indigenous peoples almost always referred
to themselves as “the people”. For instance, the Iroquoian-speaking Mohawks called
themselves “Kanyenkehaka” or the “people of the place of the flint,” after a type of rocks
that were located in their homelands along the Mohawk River Valley. However, for their

22 L’Honoré Naber, ed. Toortse der Zeevaart door Dierick Ruyters (1623). Samuel Brun’s
Schiffarten (1624) (LV 6) (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1913), 65. On creole interpreters on the
West African coast, see Ira Berlin, “From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of
Algonquian-speaking neighbors, the “Kanyenkehaka” were alternately called the
“Mohawks” which meant “eaters of human flesh” or “Maquas”, a more neutral term that
meant simply “Iroquoian-speakers.” Likewise, in Brazil, the Tupi-speaking Indians of the
northeast labeled all native peoples with different linguistic and cultural customs as
“Tapuyas.” Although the exact meaning of this term is unknown, most scholars believe
that it was a generic term for any native people who were not Tupi-speakers.23

In this chapter I will first provide a comparison of Indian-Dutch relations in Brazil
and North America during the initial period of cross-cultural contact (1600-1635).
Whereas the Dutch and Indians in Brazil needed each other as allies against the common
Portuguese enemy, Indian-Dutch relations in mid-Atlantic North America were primarily
shaped by economic exchange. Despite different contexts of intercultural relations, the
Dutch employed similar linguistic strategies to establish communication in Brazil and
North America. However, as I show in the second half of this chapter, these strategies
were only partially successful. While signs and gestures allowed for basic material
exchanges, such non-verbal forms of communication were ineffective for more complex
intercultural negotiations and talks. Moreover, gestures were often misinterpreted and
could have different meanings for different peoples. Although the Dutch deployment of

23 For the meaning of the name “Kanyenkehaka,” see Dean R. Snow, Charles T. Gehring,
and William A. Starna, eds., In Mohawk Country: Early Narratives about a Native People (The
Iroquois and Their Neighbors) (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996), xxiii. For the
meanings of the term “Mohawks,” see Daniel K. Richter, The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The
Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization (Chapel Hill: University of
North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1992), 282. I have
followed Richter here in using the more recognizable term “Mohawks” rather than the somewhat
unfamiliar name “Kanyenkehaka”. For the names of other native peoples in mid-Atlantic North
America, see Allen W. Trelease, Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century
(orig. published in 1960) (reprint: Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), chapter I. For
South American Indians: Volume 1: The Marginal Tribes (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian
linguistic middlemen made possible more sophisticated communication with native peoples, these cultural brokers could also not erase lingering suspicions between the Dutch and Indians. Since each side needed the other either as military allies in Brazil or as trading partners in North America, the Dutch were forced to look for more reliable modes of communication.

1. Brazilian Background

When discussing Dutch activities in Brazil during the early seventeenth century, it is important to make distinctions between those in the colonial center and the periphery of Portuguese Brazil. The colonial center comprised the sugar growing provinces of Bahia, Pernambuco, Itamaracá, and Paraíba whereas the periphery consisted of the northern frontier provinces of Rio Grande do Norte, Ceará, and Maranhão. While most Dutch merchants and carriers were interested in the lucrative sugar trade that dominated the colonial center, a small number of Dutch traders bartered European manufactured goods for dyewood and other items with autonomous Indian communities in the colonial periphery. In addition to these spatial differences, it is also important to distinguish between the periods before and after the founding of the West India Company (WIC) in 1621 when describing Dutch activities in Brazil. While the era preceding the WIC’s founding was marked by peaceful and successful Dutch economic penetration of the Brazilian sugar trade, after 1621 the Dutch used the WIC as a military organization to establish colonial rule over northeastern Brazil.24

24 For the distinctions between colonial center and periphery, see James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz, Early Latin America: A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil (Cambridge Latin American Studies 46) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 202-204, and especially the map on 255.
The Dutch participation in the Brazilian sugar trade was facilitated by several factors. First, the economic and political integration of the Low Countries into the Habsburg Empire allowed for the involvement of Flemish merchants and Dutch carriers in the Iberian empire of the Atlantic world. By the mid-sixteenth century, Antwerp had become the main distribution center in Northwestern Europe of precious Atlantic commodities such as wine and especially sugar. After the high quality sugar from northeastern Brazil replaced sugar from the Atlantic islands by the 1570s, several Flemish merchants established themselves in Bahia and Recife to gain better access in the booming sugar business. In addition, because of their widely known status as fast and cheap carriers of bulk goods, shipping companies from the Dutch coastal provinces Holland and Zeeland were hired by Flemish merchants to transport Brazilian sugar to various European harbors.25

A second factor that contributed to the increasing Dutch participation in the Brazilian sugar trade was the outbreak of the Dutch Revolt against Habsburg Spain. When Spanish troops occupied Antwerp in 1585 as part of Philip the Second’s campaign against the Protestant Dutch rebels, many Flemish merchants relocated to Amsterdam and other cities in the province of Holland where they continued their economic operations. In addition to the Flemish merchants, the sizable Sephardic or Portuguese-Jewish community of Antwerp also moved to Amsterdam during the late sixteenth century.

Since many Portuguese-Jewish merchants in Antwerp had established family business-networks with New Christians or forcibly converted Jews in colonial Brazil, Amsterdam soon became the new center of the Portuguese-Jewish sugar trade.26

The Spanish Crown, which had incorporated Portugal since 1580, rightly feared that Dutch dominance of the profitable Brazilian sugar trade contributed to the war-coffers of the United Provinces. However, Spanish attempts to oust the Dutch from the Brazilian sugar trade during the early seventeenth century proved largely a failure. When Spain declared an embargo on Dutch ships in the Iberian overseas world, several Dutch naval expeditions ransacked northeastern Brazilian ports during the early 1600s. Moreover, during the Twelve Years’ Truce (1609-1621) between Spain and the United Provinces, the Dutch effectively established control over the Brazilian sugar trade. Dutch shippers shrewdly avoided the ongoing Spanish embargo by carrying sugar under Portuguese flags. Imports of Brazilian sugar into the United Provinces experienced rapid growth in this period. According to a petition of prominent merchants to political officials in The Hague in 1622, Dutch ships had established a virtual monopoly on the shipping of

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Brazilian sugar to Europe. In addition, while only four sugar refineries were located in Amsterdam in 1594, no less than twenty-five Amsterdam sugar refineries existed by the early 1620s.27

While the Dutch were fully involved in the trans-Atlantic trade with Brazil before 1621, they developed several different attitudes towards Brazilian Indians. For educated armchair travelers in the United Provinces, Brazilian Indians were primarily seen as exotic savages similar to other indigenous peoples that Europeans had become fascinated about since the Iberian overseas voyages to Africa, Asia, and America during the fifteenth century. Because of their anthropophagic rituals, the coastal Tupi peoples were especially seen as exotic “others” by European observers and artists. For instance, one year after its original German publication in 1557, a Dutch translation of Hans Staden’s account of his captivity among the coastal Tupis was published. In this remarkable narrative, Staden portrayed his captors as cannibalistic savages.28

In contrast to this view of Brazilian Indians as ferocious wild men, Dutch merchants and shippers who visited northeastern Brazilian port-towns to take in raw sugar mostly viewed local natives as useful laborers in the colonial economy. A rare view of this attitude was provided by Dierick Ruiters, an experienced navigator who visited Salvador de Bahia from 1617 to 1618. His travel account provides a revealing view of the

27 For a summary of this argument, see Ernst van den Boogaart, Pieter C. Emmer, Peter Klein, and Kees Zandvliet, La Expansión Holandesa en el Atlántico, 1580-1800 (Collección Mar y America 10), (Madrid: Mapfre, 1992), 76-80. See also Israel, Dutch Republic, 320-321. For the number of sugar refineries in Amsterdam, see De Vries and Van der Woude, Nederland, 1500-1815, 463. For the petition of 1622, see Vlessing, “Portuguese-Jewish Merchant Community,” 231.

attitudes of Dutch sugar merchants towards Brazilian Indians in the northeast before the founding of the WIC in 1621. After having scornfully described the relationship between Portuguese colonists and their Angolan slaves, Ruiters went on to give a much more positive description of the Indian workers. Referring to the Tupi-speaking Indians who were familiar with colonial society as “Brazilians” to differentiate them from Indian peoples living outside of the boundaries of Portuguese influence, Ruiters commented that “The Portuguese always use these Brazilians as commanders over the blacks; they are very shrewd to learn all kinds of crafts and they are also very skilled in catching fish which they obtain in more ways than the Portuguese themselves; as a result one of these Brazilians is regarded higher than two Negroes from Angola.” Ruiters also considered the Indians “strong and laboring like mules; they do not want to be spoken of badly and they also do not tolerate to be commanded twice for the same order; they are so conscientious that when they are ordered to do something they will not rest before it is done.” In short, Ruiters was clearly impressed with the skills of the Tupi workers.29 Yet another Dutch attitude toward Brazilian Indians existed on the northern periphery of colonial Brazil, where Dutch traders dealt on a more equal basis with various Indian communities. In these frontier provinces the Portuguese had only established a tenuous influence over the various Indian polities. French traders had been visiting this region since the early sixteenth century, in order to exchange manufactured European goods for brazilwood, minerals, and parrots with the local Indians. The Potiguars, a Tupi-speaking people

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whose homelands were located in Paraíba and Rio Grande do Norte, had been particularly successful in using the French alliance to keep at bay Portuguese expeditions until the early 1600s. At the end of the sixteenth century Dutch merchants joined French traders in obtaining the valuable Brazilian goods. However, compared with the much more extensive Dutch participation in the profitable sugar business, the Dutch trade with the Indian communities in the Brazilian colonial periphery was very limited and probably only comprised of several expeditions a year. In addition, while the French had been actively aiding the Potiguars against the Portuguese, Dutch traders remained neutral in the Portuguese-Indian conflict in the colonial periphery.30

The diverse Dutch attitudes toward Brazilian Indians as cannibalistic wild men, plantation laborers, and independent trading partners were complemented with a new view after the founding of the West India Company in 1621. Toward the end of the Twelve Years’ Truce with Spain (1609-1621), Dutch political hardliners increasingly called for a renewal of the war against the Spanish Crown to ensure Dutch independence once and for all. In addition, anti-Catholic Dutch Calvinists called for the Protestant evangelization of the overseas world in order to break the global power of the papist Catholic Church. Arguing that extending the war against Spain to the Americas and the Atlantic would not only weaken the enemy and the Catholic Church but would also benefit the Dutch economy and the Calvinist religion, influential merchants, magistrates,

and ministers successfully lobbied the States-General to charter the WIC. Primarily intended as a war-instrument to undermine Spanish power in the Atlantic world, the WIC also received exclusive rights to deploy mercantile activities in the Americas and West Africa. Having attracted abundant capital from individual Dutch investors by 1623, the Company deliberated what strategy to pursue against the Spanish Crown. After a short time of consideration and debate, the Heeren XIX, the executive WIC board consisting of nineteen directors, resolved to invade the sugar growing regions of northeastern Brazil.  

There were several reasons why the Heeren XIX targeted northeastern Brazil. First, a successful invasion of Brazil was going to generate lucrative profits for the WIC. By occupying the sugar regions of the northeast, the Company would be able to fully control the enormously profitable sugar trade and also shut out from competition any of the individual Dutch shipping companies who still transported sugar from Brazil to Europe. Secondly, because the Spanish Crown had incorporated Portugal and its overseas possessions into its own empire in 1580, invading northeastern Brazil would deprive the Spanish Crown of access to important revenues derived from the Atlantic sugar trade. Thirdly, the Heeren XIX rightly concluded that targeting the weakly defended Brazilian coastline was less risky than attacking the strongly fortified towns in the Spanish Caribbean or Mexico. In addition, an influential faction within the WIC sincerely

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believed that European colonists as well as African slaves in Brazil would actively welcome a Dutch invasion. Arguing that the Spanish Crown and the Inquisition had established a reign of terror in Brazil following the Spanish incorporation of the Portuguese Crown in 1580, these anti-Spanish propagandists reasoned that a WIC invasion of Brazil would receive important local support from both Europeans and Africans.³²

The proponents for an invasion of Brazil also argued that the Brazilian Indians would actively aid the WIC. The idea that the indigenous inhabitants of Brazil would align themselves with the Dutch was mainly derived from already existing English and Dutch anti-Spanish propaganda equating Spanish tyranny in Europe with Spanish oppression in the Americas. Since the outbreak of the Dutch Revolt in the 1560s, Dutch rebels had painstakingly promoted and published pamphlets and works that supposedly revealed the brutal treatment of Native Americans by the Spanish Crown. In using the trope of global Spanish tyranny, these propagandists concluded that the Indian peoples were “natural allies” in the Dutch struggle against the Spanish Crown. Because Brazil had become a possession of the Spanish Crown since 1580, the supporters of a WIC invasion therefore extended the idea of a “natural alliance” between the Dutch and the Indians to the native Brazilians. However, not all persons in favor of a Dutch assault on Brazil supported the idea of the Brazilian Indians as “natural allies”. According to some contemporary critics the Brazilian Indians would reject any Dutch overtures because they

³² For the motivations to invade Brazil, see Jan Andries Moerbeeck, Redenen Waeromme de West-Indische Compagnie dient te trachten het Landt van Brasilia den Coninck van Spagnien te Ontmachtigen (Amsterdam, 1624). This document was delivered as a petition to the States-General in April 1623 to obtain support for a WIC invasion of Brazil. See also The Dutch in Brazil, 14-16. Dierick Ruiters was one of the proponents arguing that Portuguese and Jewish colonists would aid the Dutch. Ruiters boasted this after having visited Salvador de Bahia in 1618-1619; see Naber, ed. Toortse der Zeevaart, 36-39.
had too closely associated themselves with the Portuguese colonizers. Furthermore, since Dutch readers were also familiar with the popular European portrayal of Brazilian Indians as non-Christian cannibalistic savages, it is likely that WIC officials would also have been skeptical of establishing an alliance with the Indian peoples.\footnote{Benjamin Schmidt analyzes the idea of a “natural alliance” between the Dutch and American Indians at length in \textit{Innocence Abroad: The Dutch Imagination and the New World, 1570-1670} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001). For a similar idea among the English, see Edmund D. Morgan, \textit{American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia} (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975), chapter 1. For contemporary Dutch criticism of the idea of a “natural alliance”, as well as other pros and cons for an invasion of Brazil, see Caspar Barlaeus, \textit{Nederlandsch Brazilië onder het bewind van Johan Maurits, Grave van Nassau, 1637-1644} (ed. and trans. by S.P. L’Honoré Naber), (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1923), 13-15. For a critique of Schmidt’s idea of Indians as Dutch allies, see the review by Roelof van Gelder, “Onze broeders van de overkant,” \textit{NRC Handelsblad}, August 30, 2002.}

Despite these reservations, the \textit{Heeren XIX} as well as most investors were confident of a quick and easy victory in Brazil. In the spring of 1624 a large WIC force of 26 ships and more than 3,000 soldiers attacked the Portuguese colonial capital Salvador de Bahia. Unfortunately for the WIC, the Dutch soon realized that most of their arguments for invading Brazil were entirely ill-founded. Although the WIC expeditionary force quickly captured the port-town with the guidance of Dierick Ruyters and obtained the support of some Jewish residents and African slaves, the Portuguese inhabitants put up a spirited guerilla-fight in the hinterland. Furthermore, local Tupi warriors joined Portuguese fighters in ambushing WIC troops who ventured outside the city-walls. Many of these coastal Indians were experienced military auxiliaries of the Portuguese who had seen service against other native peoples that had resisted Portuguese colonialism. Contained in the coastal town and without receiving adequate military support from the
United Provinces, the demoralized WIC forces eventually surrendered when a large Spanish-Portuguese naval force arrived at Salvador de Bahia in April 1625.\(^{34}\)

In the face of this costly and humiliating defeat, the WIC temporarily shelved any operations against Brazil. From 1625 to 1629 the *Heeren XIX* concentrated on obtaining new financial resources and, after several years of successful privateering in the Spanish Caribbean that culminated with the capture of one of the annual Spanish silver fleets in 1628, the WIC soon had enough capital again to launch a renewed invasion of Brazil. Wisely avoiding another costly attack on the strategic stronghold of Salvador de Bahia, the WIC now targeted the weakly defended coastline of the rich sugar-province of Pernambuco. In addition, remembering the generally hostile response of the Tupis around Salvador de Bahia, the *Heeren XIX* also hoped that the native peoples in Pernambuco and the northern frontier provinces would be more sympathetic towards the Dutch. The *Heeren XIX* even instructed Company officials who were sent with the invasion force to Brazil, to attract local Indians to their side by codifying the prohibition of Indian slavery in any future territory held by the WIC.\(^{35}\)

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\(^{35}\) For Dutch privateering in the Caribbean, see Kris E. Lane, *Pillaging the Empire: Piracy in the Americas, 1500-1750* (Latin American Realities), (Armonk and New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 67-71. For the codification of the prohibition of Indian slavery in 1629, see *Nederlanders in Brazilië*, 211 and 228, note 21. This social history of the Dutch in Brazil was originally published in Portuguese in 1947 as *Tempo dos Flamengos: Influência da Ocupação Holandesa na Vida e na Cultura do Norte do Brasil*. The most recent edition of this study in Portuguese is the enlarged third edition published in Recife by the Fundação Joaquim Nabuco, in 1987. For the ordinance prohibiting Indian slavery see also J.A. Schiltkamp, “On Common
In February 1630, a massive Dutch force of 67 ships and some 7,000 troops arrived on the Pernambuco shore and quickly occupied the coastal towns of Olinda and Recife. Once again, the Portuguese colonists succeeded in penning the WIC soldiers inside Olinda and Recife. Moreover, just as in the previous attack on Salvador de Bahia, local Tupis as well as free blacks provided crucial military support to the Portuguese. The WIC forces eventually scored some military victories in 1632 with the aid of Domingos Fernandes Calabar, a person of Portuguese-African descent, who guided and taught the Company soldiers how to execute guerilla attacks. In addition, by receiving continuous military supplies and reinforcements from Europe, the Company commanders in Brazil were able to strengthen their army and remain on the offensive.\(^3\)

Despite these successes, the WIC invasion force in Pernambuco remained surrounded by a small but well-experienced multi-ethnic army of Portuguese soldiers, free blacks, and Tupi warriors. To break this encirclement the WIC government based in Olinda decided to launch a second front in the frontier provinces of Rio Grande do Norte and Ceará. Through Indian messengers as well as Tupi envoys that had been taken to the Republic for an education as interpreters and guides in 1625 (see chapter 2), WIC officials learned that the various Indian peoples in the provinces north of Pernambuco were eager to make an anti-Portuguese alliance. In addition, several Tupi messengers from the provinces of Itamaracá and Paraíba reached the WIC invading force in Pernambuco during the early 1630s to ask Dutch officials to attack the isolated Ground. Legislation, Government, Jurisprudence and Law in the Dutch West Indian Colonies: The Order of Government of 1629,” *DHM*, LXX, no. 4 (1997), 78.

\(^3\) For the Pernambuco invasion, see *Dutch in Brazil*, chapter 2; and Van den Boogaart, “Nederlandse expansie in het Atlantische gebied,” 119.
Portuguese forts in these frontier areas as well. Because Dutch traders knew from previous interactions with the natives that the Portuguese presence in these provinces was relatively weak compared to Pernambuco and Bahia, the Company rightly concluded that attacking the colonial periphery was a realistic strategy. By creating a new front in the colonial periphery north of Pernambuco, the WIC and their Indian allies would be able to launch surprise attacks overland and break Portuguese resistance in the northeast.

For the Tupi- and non-Tupi-speaking Indian peoples who lived in the colonial periphery of Portuguese Brazil, the Dutch invaders were potentially useful military allies. Many native inhabitants of Rio Grande do Norte and Paraíba had been enslaved or forcibly put to work in the sugar plantations by the Portuguese. As a result, these native peoples strongly resented the Luso-Brazilian colonizers. This diplomatic and military context of mutually beneficial alliances subsequently shaped Dutch-Indian relations in northeastern Brazil during the first half of the seventeenth century.37

2. North American Background

While WIC-Indian interactions in northeastern Brazil were shaped by the Dutch-Iberian imperial conflict, Dutch relations with the native peoples in mid-Atlantic North America were shaped by the exchange of material goods as well as by WIC attempts to

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promote colonization. Like their compatriots in Brazil, Dutch navigators and traders arrived in the Northern Atlantic long after other Europeans. Basque, Portuguese, Spanish, French, and English fishermen had been regularly visiting the coastal waters of eastern Canada to exploit its rich maritime resources of cod and whales since the early sixteenth century. To complement their income from fisheries these Europeans soon established a small but growing barter system with Algonquian- and Iroquoian-speaking peoples along the northeastern Atlantic seaboard. The Dutch were initially not interested in these economic activities in the Northern Atlantic. The rich herring grounds of the North Sea provided a boon for Dutch fishermen and Dutch merchants had gained access to animal furs themselves through Russian traders in Archangel during the last quarter of the sixteenth century.38

Contrary to most scholarship on the subject, the sudden Dutch interest in northeastern North America was not brought about by the expedition of Henry Hudson in 1609 to the river that would later carry his name. Instead, the Dutch had become attracted to the Northern Atlantic in a circuitous way during the 1590s. When the enormously lucrative carrying-trade sector, which formed the foundation of Dutch prosperity,

expanded from Northern Europe into France and the Mediterranean, Dutch merchants came into contact with the French and Iberian fishermen who were already active in the Northern Atlantic. Attracted to the profitable cod-fisheries dominated by these South Europeans, Dutch entrepreneurs began to fit out mercantile expeditions to the Northern Atlantic themselves in the 1590s. Since they lacked the specialized skills and techniques for whaling and drying cod, Dutch merchants initially made joint ventures with experienced Basque whalers or French traders. It was through these contacts that the Dutch also learned about the ongoing intercultural exchange between Europeans and Indians along the Northeastern American seaboard. Because of a growing demand for the high quality American beaver furs in Europe, Dutch traders soon became interested in the cross-cultural fur trade with coastal Indian peoples as well.\(^{39}\)

However, since they were latecomers in the Northern Atlantic, Dutch merchants eager to obtain beaver furs were at a disadvantage in finding Indian providers of animal pelts. In most places throughout the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and along the coast of Maine, experienced French and English traders had already established the necessary connections with native hunters. Fortunately for the Dutch, Henry Hudson made his accidental discovery of a hitherto neglected major waterway on the Northeastern American coast in 1609. An English navigator hired by the Dutch East India Company to

seek out a possible Northeastern Passage to the East Indies, he found this impossible amidst the ice floes of the Barents Sea. Reversing course and looking for an alternative Northwestern Passage in the relatively unexplored mid-Atlantic coast, Hudson eventually arrived at Delaware Bay and New York Bay. Navigating up the river that connected to the latter bay, Hudson came in contact with various Algonquian communities who provided him with foodstuffs and animal hides.40

Although Hudson was held up by English authorities upon arriving in the harbor of Dartmouth in the fall of 1609, his discoveries quickly made their way to Amsterdam merchants eager to capitalize on the growing European demand for beaver furs. Realizing that Hudson had unveiled a new market for furs not yet exploited by English and French competitors, a small consortium of Amsterdam merchants quickly fitted out expeditions to the Hudson River. According to the noted scholar Joannes de Laet, Dutch traders were already active in the Hudson River in 1610. During the following years, several Dutch ships a year sailed into the Hudson Valley to obtain beaver furs from local Algonquian-speaking Indian communities in exchange for a number of trade goods that varied from glass beads to iron tools. However, because it was relatively inexpensive to organize a fur trade expedition, the original group of Amsterdam merchants was soon forced to compete

with other Dutch entrepreneurs. This competition soon resulted in higher prices for furs, as shrewd Indian suppliers of pelts sold their precious items to the highest Dutch bidder.\textsuperscript{41}

To prevent further damaging competition and price increases, the various Dutch trade companies formed a single company that received an exclusive charter from the States-General in January 1615 to deploy mercantile activities in the region north of Delaware Bay for a period of three years. Despite this charter, the New-Netherland Company, as the syndicate of previously rivaling companies was now called, was soon faced with Dutch interlopers. In addition, since the Delaware Bay fell outside of the charter’s territory, independent Dutch traders could obtain beaver furs there as well.

When the New-Netherland Company sought to renew its charter in 1618, the States-General rejected the request, presumably because plans where already being made at that time for a general West India Company whose theatre of operations would include North America. As a result, the region called New Netherland by the Dutch remained essentially a free trade zone claimed by the States-General under the ambiguous rights of “discovery” and first navigation by Henry Hudson in 1609. The English Crown formally contested the Dutch claim by arguing that English trade companies had already received exclusive royal contracts to exploit and colonize the region between the Chesapeake Bay and New England in 1606. Although the English Crown was unwilling to forcibly confront the Dutch at a time when Spain was a common enemy for both countries, the

\textsuperscript{41} This description of early Dutch trade in New Netherland is based upon \textit{Zegenrijk Gewest}, 55-57. See also Hart, \textit{Prehistory of the New Netherland Company}, 17-33; Rink, \textit{Holland on the Hudson}, 32-44. For Joannes de Laet’s assertion of Dutch traders in the Hudson Valley in 1610, see “From the ‘New World’ by Johan de Laet, 1625, 1630, 1633, 1640,” \textit{NNN}, 38.
issue over who held the legitimate claim over mid-Atlantic North America was never
resolved between the two European nation-states.42

By the time of the founding of the WIC in 1621, a handful of Dutch trading
vessels visited the region known as Nieuw Nederlandt annually. Compared to the
Brazilian sugar trade in the same period, the fur trade of New Netherland remained very
small. While the monetary value of the Dutch trade in North American animal furs did
not rise above an average of 60,000 guilders per year in the period 1600-1621, the Dutch
share in the Brazilian sugar trade during the same years generated an annual average
value of more than 3 million guilders. Despite the small profitability of the New
Netherland fur trade, the WIC was determined to expand the trade in pelts in New
Netherland. To exclude any Dutch interlopers as well as European powers, the Company
established a permanent headquarters with several farms on Manhattan in 1625 and also
occupied several already existing trading posts on the Delaware and Hudson Rivers. At
one of these fortified stations, Fort Orange at the site of present-day Albany, WIC
employees were successful in establishing profitable commercial relations with the
Algonquian-speaking Mahicans and the Iroquoian-speaking Mohawks. According to
reliable information from Joannes de Laet in 1636, the Company export of animal furs
from New Netherland grew continuously after 1624 and reached a value of almost
135,000 guilders in 1635.43

42 See Zegenrijk gewest, 55 (English claims on New Netherland), 57-60 (New Netherland
Company); Hart, Prehistory of the New Netherland Company, 33-38; Rink, Holland on the
Hudson, 47-49. For the differences between Dutch and English “ceremonies of possession” in the
Americas, see Patricia Seed, Ceremonies of Possession in Europe’s Conquest of the New World,
1492-1640 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), chapters 1 and 5.

43 For the financial value of Dutch trade in Brazil and New Netherland in the period
1600-1621, see Van den Boogaart, et al, La Expansión Holandes, 102. For the development of
In addition to this official fur trade, local Dutch colonists and Company employees also exchanged goods and foodstuffs with Indians on an informal basis. Because the WIC invested most of its time and resources in the invasion of Brazil, the relatively small number of colonists in New Netherland often lacked adequate food supplies and other resources. The European settlers in New Netherland therefore quickly established a bartering system with the local native peoples. While the Indians supplied the colonists with foodstuffs and beaver skins, the colonists provided their native neighbors with a variety of manufactured goods.44

Despite the emerging of this “frontier exchange economy” in which Indians and Dutch traded goods and services on a face-to-face basis, Dutch relations with native peoples in New Netherland were not necessarily amicable. For instance, when the WIC commander at Fort Orange provided military support to the Mahicans in their ongoing war against the Mohawks in 1626, Mohawk warriors ambushed the joint Mahican-Dutch warparty and killed several Company soldiers. In addition, intercultural misunderstandings or willful arrogance on either side sometimes resulted in violent incidents. Furthermore, by the early 1630s several Indian communities throughout the region of what was called New Netherland were faced with permanent European colonists. To offset the costs of maintaining the WIC presence in North America, the Heeren XIX resolved in 1629 to promote colonization and allowed prominent investors to

44 A good discussion of the emergence of this bartering economy is described by Susan Elizabeth Shaw, “Building New Netherland: Gender and Family Ties in a Frontier Society,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Cornell University Press, 2000), chapter 2. I will discuss the frontier exchange economy of New Netherland in more detail in chapter 5 of the dissertation.
develop and administer their own colonies within the area claimed by the WIC. Although these private colonies or *patroons* did not attract many European farmers and artisans, the presence of small European communities caused tensions in Indian-Dutch relations such as in early 1632 when one *patroonship* on Delaware Bay was destroyed by local Algonquians. In short, in New Netherland Indian-Dutch relations were not only shaped by intercultural exchange but also by mutual distrust and suspicions. In contrast, in northeastern Brazil the mutual need for an anti-Iberian alliance drew native peoples and the WIC closer together.45

3. Gestures and Signs

When the Dutch first encountered the indigenous peoples of mid-Atlantic North America and northeastern Brazil, the various parties initially relied on already existing forms of non-verbal communication. Although Dutch navigators and sailors had become somewhat acquainted with indigenous peoples of West-Africa, Asia, and some parts of the Americas since the 1590s, the Dutch arrived essentially unfamiliar with the Native American peoples in Brazil and North America. Perhaps the most basic communication strategy used in relations between the Dutch and the Indians in North America and Brazil

during the early seventeenth century involved the use of gestures and signs. When Jan
Baptist Syens, an Amsterdam navigator, reached the frontier provinces of Ceara and Rio
Grande in northeastern Brazil in the late summer of 1600 to search for precious minerals,
local Indians greeted him and his crew with “many signs of friendship.” Although it is
not known what kind of “signs” Syens meant, it is likely that the Indian gestures involved
the waving and motioning of hands to welcome the Dutch visitors. In the same way,
during the voyage of exploration by Henry Hudson of the mid-Atlantic region in 1609,
Robert Juet, an officer on Hudson’s ship, reported how two prominent Algonquian men
made “signes that wee should come downe to them.”46

While these gestures were somewhat useful in establishing rudimentary contacts,
both sides complemented the ambiguous and easily misunderstood sign language with
more elaborate non-verbal forms of communication such as the exchange of gifts and
food. Since the distribution of presents and food were considered to be symbols of good
will and friendship among Europeans and Native Americans, both groups frequently
resorted to this tactic to establish a peaceful relationship. After Syens took aboard six
northeastern Brazilian Indians in August 1600, he provided each of them with a present,
“after which they returned very happily to the land.” Likewise, in an Algonquian oral
tradition documented by the Moravian missionary John Heckewelder in the early
nineteenth century, unnamed European visitors offered the natives of coastal New York
liquor and material goods. Similarly, during Hudson’s visit to North America in 1609, the

46 For Syens, see Bondam, “Journeaux et Nouvelles Tirées,” 159. For Juet, see “From
was probably an ethnic Englishman, reflecting the mixed English-Dutch crew of Hudson’s
expedition. For this, see Lois M. Feister, “Linguistic Communication between the Dutch and
previously mentioned Juet noted how the local Algonquians offered the European crew tobacco, food and presents. In his entry for the eleventh of September, Juet observed that “The people of the Countrey came aboord of us, making shew of love, and gave us Tabacco and Indian Wheat [corn], and departed for that night.” The presentation of tobacco was especially significant in this respect because Native Americans considered the smoking of tobacco a sacred ritual to establish goodwill with strangers whose intentions and spiritual significance were unknown.47

In addition to the barter of food items and gifts, the Indians also attempted to secure peaceful relations with the Dutch newcomers by using females as diplomatic symbols of friendship. As Gordon Sayre has recently pointed out, “Most Indian nations were accustomed to strengthening alliances through intermarriage or sexual exchange.” However, since the Dutch, like other early modern Europeans, viewed diplomacy and long-distance trade as exclusively belonging to the male sphere, they were often confused by the presence of females in encounters with Native Americans in Brazil and North America. While Dutch sailors and soldiers probably interpreted the attendance of Indian

girls and women in diplomatic meetings as an indication of the sexual availability of Native American women, Dutch officials describing these situations usually downplayed the role of native women in encounters to avoid the impression that Dutchmen culturally degraded themselves by entering into intimate relations with non-Christian women. For example, when Syens and his crew stayed overnight at an Indian village in the interior of northeastern Brazil, the Amsterdam navigator matter-of-factly reported how the native leaders “gave us each a woman as a sign of friendship.” Although Syens does not mention how his crewmembers responded to this gesture of friendship, Syens stoically noted that he himself “left their village for another village in order to sleep there, nearby the [emerald] rock and the King of the country.”

In his account of the Hudson voyage to the mid-Atlantic North American coast in 1609, Robert Juet also noted the activity of local Algonquian women and girls in diplomacy. On September 16, two older Algonquian men who seem to have been prominent members of their community came aboard Hudson’s ship. In a meeting that was probably intended to signify to the European visitors the extent of the native’s territory, one of the old men presented wampum beads to Hudson as a sign of friendship and then “shewed him all the Countrey there about, as though it were at his command.” Hudson reciprocated this diplomatic gesture by inviting the two old men to dinner at his ship. When the Algonquian men boarded Hudson’s vessel, a somewhat surprised Juet noted that the men “brought two old women, and two young maidens of the age of sixteene or seventeene yeeres with them, who behaved themselves very modestly.”

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Juet was puzzled at the presence of the Indian women and girls on the ship, the Algonquian men had likely taken their wives and daughters with them to make it clear to Hudson that they had peaceful intentions.49

Yet another form of non-verbal communication used by the Dutch and Indians during their first encounters were physical movements to symbolize diplomatic intentions. In a passage in Joannes de Laet’s 1625-edition of his *Nieuwe Werelt ofte Beschrijvinghe van West-Indien* (New World or Description of the West-Indies), De Laet described the dramatic gestures of some local Algonquians to Hudson during the latter’s visit to an Indian village nearby present day Albany in 1609. After having been welcomed by the Indians to sit down and enjoy a lavish meal of “a pair of pigeons” and a “fat dog,” Hudson was expected to stay overnight with his hosts in the village. However, since Hudson did not want to leave his own ship and also was unsure about the Indian intentions, he returned to his vessel. In a dramatic motion, some of the Algonquians subsequently broke their arrows and “threw them into the fire” to signify to Hudson that they did not harbor any hostile feelings toward him. Coastal Tupi-speaking Potiguar Indians in the Brazilian province of Paraíba used a similar non-verbal communication strategy when meeting Dutchmen in the spring of 1625. After having failed to provide

military support to the short-lived WIC occupation of Salvador de Bahia, a WIC fleet led by admiral Boudewijn Hendricksz temporarily disembarked at a large bay in Paraíba to take in fresh food and water. During their stay in the bay, the WIC forces came into contact with local Potiguars who had fiercely resisted Portuguese expansion into their homelands. To make their point, a warparty of Potiguars helped WIC soldiers ambush Portuguese troops. Unable to communicate effectively with the Dutch visitors, the Potiguars vividly illustrated their hatred for the Portuguese by capturing a Portuguese flag and tearing it to pieces in front of WIC officials.50

Despite these dramatic gestures and signs, the various non-verbal communication strategies used by both the Dutch and the Indians in Brazil and North America were ultimately of limited use in establishing intercultural contact. Although physical motions were helpful in bringing about a rudimentary exchange of gifts and food, sign language could not enable more complicated communication between the Dutch and the Indians. In addition, since neither Europeans nor Native Americans had developed a fixed set or system of gestures, non-verbal conversations could easily result in misunderstandings. The limitations of primarily relying upon non-verbal communication strategies became quickly clear to Dutch explorers, traders, and officials because they needed Native Americans for various economic and political goals that required a more sophisticated form of communication than the use of gestures. For Dutch merchants operating in northeastern Brazil and mid-Atlantic North America, making crude gestures was not

50 For De Laet’s account, see “From the ‘New World,’” by Johan de Laet, 1625, 1630, 1633, 1640,” NNN, 49. For De Laet and his work, see Idem, 31-35. On the encounter between the WIC fleet of Hendricksz. and the Potiguars, see S.P. L’Honoré Naber, Het Iaerlyck Verhael van Joannes de Laet, 1624-1626 : Eerste Deel (LV 34), (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1931), 85-92. For the incident with the Portuguese flag, see 92.
sufficient in establishing a complicated system of intercultural exchange. In the same way, WIC authorities seeking out a military alliance with Tupi-speaking natives in Brazil realized that a more refined method of cross-cultural communication was necessary than the ripping apart of a Portuguese flag by Potiguar warriors.\(^{51}\)

In addition, the reliance upon signs and gestures often increased rather than diminished notions of distrust among the Dutch and Native Americans. This was especially the case in the mid-Atlantic region of North America where Europeans and native peoples had not been in much contact by the time of Hudson’s expedition in 1609. During Hudson’s exploration of the river that would later bear his name, Juet often reported that he and his shipmates were intensely skeptical about the intentions of the local natives they encountered. In the absence of interpreters or a mutually understood trade language, Hudson’s crew was very anxious about the meanings of the gestures made by the Indians during intercultural meetings. For instance, even though the Algonquians living around present-day New York Bay provided them with tobacco and animal furs in early September, Hudson’s crew was not sure whether to trust the friendly Indians “so wee rode very quiet, but durst not trust them.” Because of the limited means of intercultural communication, Juet and his mates became subsequently embroiled in several skirmishes with local Native Americans during their exploration of the Hudson River.\(^{52}\)

\(^{51}\) For the limitations of sign language, see Axtell, “Babel of Tongues,” 18.

\(^{52}\) For the quote from Juet, see his journal in Jameson, ed. NNN, 18. Hudson surprisingly did not bring interpreters with him. For Hudson and the VOC, see S.P. L’Honoré Naber, ed. Henry Hudson’s reize onder Nederlandsche vlag van Amsterdam naar Nova Zembla, Amerika, en terug naar Dartmouth in Engeland, 1609, Volgens het Journaal van Robert Juet. LV 19 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1921), v-xxii. In an intriguing essay, Donna Merwick argues that Juet’s distrust toward Indians was motivated by a general Dutch fear of tricksters, that is, individuals
4. Linguistic Middlemen and the Search for Trustworthy Mediators

In the face of the limitations of primarily relying upon sign language, the Dutch quickly understood the necessity of developing more useful strategies of communication. Realizing the demand for better means of facilitating contacts with the various Indian peoples, Dutch navigators and traders soon began to hire and rely on individuals of various ethnic and religious backgrounds who already had experience in cross-cultural interactions in the Atlantic world. Ironically, at the same time as the Dutch made use of these experienced intercultural mediators, the Dutch distrusted the multilingual middlemen. Because they were not ethnic Dutch, Protestant, or not fully integrated into Dutch or European society, these seasoned interpreters, guides, and translators were generally viewed with suspicion by Dutch merchants and navigators. However, until the Dutch could employ their own interpreters or train Indians, this category of individuals were necessary to make possible more sophisticated communication between the Dutch and native peoples in Brazil and North America.

In some cases the ethnic identity of these experienced individuals was not entirely clear. For instance, upon arriving on the northeastern Brazilian coast in 1600, the earlier mentioned Amsterdam captain Jan Syens quickly employed an individual named Cayonen to facilitate negotiations with nearby Brazilian Indian communities. While the

who were not what they seemed. According to Merwick, the Dutch were obsessed with tricksters because Dutch society was itself a commercial society dominated by deceiving and manipulating merchants. However, Merwick herself concedes that it is not certain whether Juet was actually a native Dutchman or an Englishman. See Merwick, “The Work of the Trickster in the Dutch Possession of New Netherland,” in Donna Merwick, ed. Dangerous Liaisons: Essays in Honour of Greg Dening (Melbourne University History Monograph Series 19) (Parkville: Melbourne University History Department, 1994): 115-134.
log of Syens provides some information about the activities of Cayonen, it is not known whether he was Native American, African, European, or a person of mixed descent. Although he was certainly not Dutch, Cayonen’s name is too ambiguous to allow for a proper ethnic identification. In any case, the cross-cultural skills of Cayonen were considered very valuable by captain Syens because the latter offered him a monthly salary of “13.5 guilders per month in addition to his wages;” a not inconsiderable sum roughly equivalent to that of artisans or lower military officers in service of the WIC later in the seventeenth century.\(^{53}\)

When Syens hired Cayonen, the latter lived among natives of the frontier province of Rio Grande and was clearly experienced in interacting with Brazilian Indians. According to his own testimony included in Syens’ log, “Cayonen and his company retreated among the cannibals” when the Portuguese established colonial control over Rio Grande in 1597. Cayonen subsequently accompanied Syens into the interior of Rio Grande where a supposed emerald rock was thought to be located. While Syens does not provide any details about the communication with the Rio Grande Indians, it is very likely that Cayonen played an important role in these encounters. In addition, Cayonen supplied Syens with detailed information about navigable waterways and natural resources such as dyewood, spices, and cotton. At the same time, because of Cayonen’s specialized talents, he was viewed with suspicion by Syens. While little is known about his ethnic origins, Cayonen’s status as a non-ethnic Dutchman probably also contributed to a sense of distrust in Syens’ mind. Thus, when Syens made a contract with Cayonen,

\(^{53}\) For Cayonen’s salary, see Bondam, “Journeaux et Nouvelles Tirées,” 160. For the comparison with WIC salaries, see Zegenrijk gewest, 293-294. On the contract with Cayonen, see Bondam, 160.
the Amsterdam captain demanded that Cayonen remained “in my service for all the time being, on the condition that he would not trade with anybody else, not on behalf of himself nor on behalf of others.”

Although experienced intercultural mediators of American Indian descent formed a potentially valuable pool of interpreters, like Cayonen they were also distrusted by the Dutch. Making their way southward from Newfoundland to the relatively unknown coastline between New England and the Chesapeake Bay in 1609, Hudson and his crew on several occasions came upon New England natives who were already familiar with European visitors to their shores. In mid-June, after “two Boates came off to us with sixe of the Savages of the Countrey,” Juet was somewhat surprised when the natives told him “that the French-men doe Trade with them; which is very likely, for one of them spake some words of French.” One day after this encounter, local Indians even approached Hudson’s vessel in two French sloops with a specific wish list of trade goods such as knives and copper kettles that revealed their familiarity with cross-cultural trade. Similarly, in early August nearby present-day Cape Cod, Hudson’s men heard people calling from the land, and they approached them, “thinking they had been some Christians left on the land: but wee found them to bee Savages.”

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54 For Cayonen, see Bondam, “Journeaux et Nouvelles Tirées,” 158-161, 170 (“retreated among the cannibals”).

55 For the quotations from the log by Juet, see Naber, Henry Hudson’s Reize onder Nederlandsche Vlag, 28 (French speaking Indians), 29 (Indians in French sloops), 36 (Indians sounding like Europeans). It should be noted that NNN does not include this part of Juet’s account. For the familiarity of New England Indians with European traders during the early seventeenth century, see Bruce J. Bourque and Ruth H. Whitehead, “Trade and Alliances in the Contact Period,” in Emerson W. Baker, et al, eds. American Beginnings: Exploration, Culture, and Cartography in the Land of Norumbega (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994): 131-147.
Instead of employing such experienced Indian individuals for his expedition to the mid-Atlantic coast that was still largely unknown to Europeans, Hudson viewed seasoned Indian traders with great suspicion. Precisely because they disguised themselves as Europeans and pretended to be “some Christians left on the land,” Hudson and his men were not sure what to make of the intentions of these Native Americans. Like other European explorers and long-distance merchants, Hudson and his crew of English and Dutch sailors readily understood the many dangers and risks associated with navigating in foreign waters and doing business with strangers. From his own previous explorations in the North Atlantic, Hudson had likely learned to be on guard for any perils such as shipwrecks, pirates, and hostile populations. These hazards were especially pronounced on the Atlantic coast of North America, where Europeans had only established tenuous outposts in a few isolated places by the time of Hudson’s visit in 1609. Upon encountering the seemingly friendly Indians outfitted with French sloops and some French phrases, Hudson therefore feared a deception and he subsequently ordered his men to attack the natives. Revealing his own distrust for the Indians, Juet noted in his log that they “drave the Salvages from their Houses and tooke the spoyle of them, as they would have done of us.”

In addition to Native American linguistic middlemen, the Dutch also made use of persons of African descent to facilitate intercultural communication in North America. As historian Ira Berlin has recently pointed out, before the implementation of plantation slavery in the Americas in the seventeenth century, many individuals of African descent

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56 For the attack by Hudson on the natives in the French boats and Juet’s comment, see Naber, *Henry Hudson’s reize onder Nederlandsche vlag*, 31. On Hudson’s earlier voyages before 1609, see Rink, *Holland on the Hudson*, 24-25. For the risks associated with long-distance trade, see Kooijmans, “Risk and Reputation,” 25-34.
throughout the Atlantic world were not necessarily enslaved or put to work as agricultural laborers. Instead, European merchants and navigators operating in West Africa during the sixteenth century often hired African natives as intercultural mediators because of their proficiency in regional trade languages or because of their expertise as sailors. Moreover, intermarriage and intimate relations between West African women and Portuguese traders and sailors had created a group of mulattoes who often became indispensable interpreters and guides for Europeans in the Atlantic world. Because these black individuals were "familiar with the commerce of the Atlantic, fluent in its new languages, and intimate with its trade and cultures," Berlin has correctly labeled these individuals "Atlantic creoles."57

Since the Dutch and other Europeans were largely unskilled in communicating with Native Americans, employing experienced multilingual Atlantic creoles was not an unrealistic way to bridge the linguistic divide with the indigenous peoples of North America. In this respect it is significant that American Indians in the region around the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, like West Africans, had developed simplified trade languages during the sixteenth century to make possible exchange with visiting Basque and French fishermen. While the languages of West Africans and North American Indians obviously differed, the simplified trade languages used in both regions shared a similar emphasis upon facilitating intercultural exchange.58

57 Berlin, “From Creole to African.”

The usefulness of Atlantic creoles as intercultural mediators was especially revealed by the controversy surrounding Mathieu da Costa. Unfortunately, the available sources referring to Da Costa do not tell us much about this individual. One of the few things we do know is that he is mentioned as a “naigre” in French sources and as “een swart”, or a black person in Dutch notarial documents. Although his personal background is a mystery, Da Costa was originally hired by Pierre Dugua de Mons, a French Protestant nobleman who led a private colonization project under the auspices of the French Crown in what is now Nova Scotia during the early seventeenth century. Starting in 1604 or 1605, Da Costa probably functioned as interpreter between the French and local Algonquian-speaking natives. In 1606, Da Costa was kidnapped or persuaded to change allegiances by the crew of a Dutch vessel that was cruising the coastal waters around Nova Scotia, preying on Iberian ships, and trading with American Indians. This was one of the earliest recorded Dutch ships in the Northern Atlantic, and their interest in Da Costa clearly indicates that the Dutch considered Atlantic creoles to be valuable intercultural mediators.59

59 The most recent, balanced, and comprehensive discussion of Da Costa is provided by Johnston, “Mathieu da Costa.” For a reconstruction of Da Costa’s life that differs slightly from Johnston’s, see Peter Bakker, “First African into New Netherland, 1613-1614,” DHM LXVIII, No. 3 (Fall 1995): 50-53. For Da Costa being called a “Naigre”, see Robert le Blant and Rene Baudry, eds. Nouveaux documents sur Champlain et son époque Volume I (1560-1622) (Ottawa, 1967), document 105 (December 11, 1609). I thank Laurier Turgeon for providing me with a copy of this document. For Da Costa being called a “swart”, see Amsterdam City Archives (GAA), Notarial Archives, Inv. No. 263 (microfilm 133): folios 172-173 (October 8, 1607). For the colonial project of Dugua de Mons, see J. Kupp, “Quelques aspects de la dissolution de la compagnie de M. de Monts, 1607,” Revue de l’histoire de l’amérique française 24, No. 3 (1970): 357-374.
However, Dugua de Mons also viewed Da Costa as an important interpreter, and the Frenchman quickly dispatched an agent to Amsterdam to retrieve the creole through legal means. Moreover, the privateering raid of the Dutch vessel in Nova Scotia in 1606 angered the French Crown. Supported by such pressure, Dugua de Mons was able to regain control over Da Costa, with whom he subsequently made a contract again in Amsterdam in 1608. Indicative of his importance as cross-cultural mediator for Europeans in Canada, Dugua de Mons employed Da Costa for three full years and compensated him with a considerable annual salary of 60 crowns. After this contract, Da Costa almost disappears from the historical records. He is mentioned one more time, in December 1609, as having been put in custody in the French port-city of Le Havre for showing disrespect. Although it is not entirely clear why Da Costa was thrown in prison, historian A.J.B. Johnston has rightly suggested “that Da Costa possessed an independent spirit and spoke his mind freely.”

It was precisely this “independent spirit” that also characterized the career of Jan or Juan Rodriguez, an elusive but intriguing character on the historical stage of the earliest Dutch activities in the Northern Atlantic. There are only two primary sources that mention his existence. These two documents are depositions made by Dutch sailors and crewmembers before an Amsterdam notary in August 1613 and 1614. In one of the two surviving sources Rodriguez is ethnically defined as a “mulatto” who was “born in St. Domingo”, the capital of Hispaniola in the Spanish Caribbean. Because of his birth-place, and because he is twice referred to as a “Spaniard” in one of the notarial depositions, Rodriguez’s first name was most likely Juan rather than the Dutch “Jan.” According to

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60 This paragraph is based on Johnston, “Mathieu da Costa,” 18-20. For the quotation, see page 19.
the available sources, Rodriguez arrived somewhere along the Lower Hudson Valley in the spring of 1613 aboard a Dutch ship whose crew wanted to exchange European goods for beaver furs with the local Algonquian-speaking Indians.61

Like Da Costa, Rodriguez quickly became the center of a dispute among the various Dutch trade companies that competed for cross-cultural trade in the mid-Atlantic North American coast following Hudson’s expedition of 1609. Thijs Volckertsz Mossel, the captain of a Dutch ship operating in the Lower Hudson Valley in the spring and summer of 1613, had hired Rodriguez for reasons that are never explicitly discussed in the notarial depositions. However, the available documentation strongly indicates that he was recruited as an intercultural mediator to facilitate trade between the Dutch and the Algonquians. For instance, when Rodriguez disembarked from Mossel’s ship, he was supplied with eighty hatchets and an unnamed number of knives. Clearly, these hatchets and knives were trade goods that Rodriguez was expected to exchange with Indian customers in return for animal pelts. In addition, when Mossel returned to the United Provinces in the summer of 1613, Rodriguez stayed behind, which strongly suggests that he was ordered by Mossel to act as a trade agent of some sort in the Lower Hudson Valley. Finally, his special status as cross-cultural negotiator was also revealed when

61 Rodriguez is mentioned in two notarial records that are translated by Simon Hart in his *Prehistory of New Netherland*, 74-75 (August 20, 1613), 80-83 (July 23, 1614). Hart was an archivist at the Amsterdam City Archive. For Hart’s interpretation of these documents, see Hart, *Prehistory of New Netherland*, 23, 26. For a slightly different interpretation, see Van Cleaf Bachman, *Pelttries or Plantations*, 6-7. See also Bakker, “First African into New Netherland.” There is a strong possibility that Rodriguez was associated with a Spanish expedition to the Chesapeake Bay in 1609, several years before he was hired by the Dutch. See John H. Hann, ed. and trans. “Translation of the Ecija Voyages of 1605 and 1609 and the González Derrotero of 1609,” *Florida Archeology* 2 (1986): 1-80. I have explored this possibility in my paper “Spanish or African? Reconstructing the Career and Identity of Juan Rodriguez, Atlantic Creole Factor, 1609-1614,” presented at the annual meeting of the American Society for Ethnohistory, Quebec City, Canada, October 16-20, 2002.
Rodriguez offered his services to another Dutch trade company. Upon returning to the mid-Atlantic coast in the spring of 1614, Mossel violently confronted Rodriguez after realizing that the latter had hired himself out to a Dutch competitor. Punishing him, Mossel’s crewmembers physically attacked Rodriguez and contemptuously insulted him as “that black rascal.”

Significantly, after this incident Rodriguez disappears from the historical record. Although it is not certain what happened to Rodriguez after 1614, Mossel’s anger toward Rodriguez indicates that Dutch merchants and navigators perceived black Atlantic Creoles as untrustworthy. Since issues like personal trust and loyalty were highly valued by Dutch merchants operating in the volatile and risky world of long-distance trade, Rodriguez was probably not hired anymore by Dutch trade companies following his changing of allegiances. The perceived disloyalty of individuals like Rodriguez was especially pronounced by their status as non-ethnic Dutch outsiders. While racism based on skin-color was likely not the main motive for the Dutch distrust of Rodriguez, the Dutch descriptions of him as a “mulatto” and “black rascal” clearly marked Rodriguez as an outsider in the Dutch naval and mercantile community. In addition, Spanish-ness may have compounded black-ness in Dutch minds, for seventeenth century Dutchmen often stereotyped Spaniards as haughty and lazy persons who were not reliable.

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Not all intercultural mediators employed by the Dutch were immediately viewed with suspicion. For instance, during the expedition to the relatively isolated Amazonian province of Maranhão in 1610, the trader Hendryck Hendrycksen Cop and the captain Claes Adriaenssen Cluyt heavily relied on the services of several Frenchmen who were experienced visitors to the area. As we have seen in the previous chapter, since the early sixteenth century French merchants interested in Brazilian dyewood had dispatched trading vessels on a frequent basis to a part of northeastern Brazil that was thinly colonized by the Portuguese. By the time of Cop and Cluyt’s voyage, a considerable number of French traders and navigators had mastered native trade languages and customs sufficiently to trade with the local Tupi-speaking Indians. After their arrival in the complex maze of coastal waters in Maranhão, Cop and Cluyt were initially unable to attract Indians to them because they did not speak any native language. It was only after providing curious Indians with Dutch beer that Cop and Cluyt were taken to indigenous villages. When they arrived there, the Dutchmen found two French traders who spoke Dutch well. With the help of these seasoned French traders, Cop and Cluyt were eventually able to obtain the highly prized red dyewood from the Indians.64

Although this episode reveals that intercultural mediators were not always considered untrustworthy, the Dutch reliance upon the two French traders must be put into spatial and historical contexts. First, the expedition of Cop and Cluyt took place in a region that was heavily contested by the Portuguese and other European intruders. Unlike the Hudson Valley that was only beginning to be explored by European navigators and

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64 For this episode, see Bondam, “Journeaux et Nouvelles Tirées,” 161-170.
merchants, the Brazilian frontier provinces of Rio Grande, Ceará, and Maranhão had been colonized, albeit marginally, by Portugal since the early sixteenth century. French intruders who attempted to establish intercultural exchange with Indians in these frontier provinces were repeatedly harassed by Portuguese and Spanish military expeditions. In the face of Iberian hostility to European interlopers, Dutch newcomers such as Cop and Cluyt therefore considered French traders who were already present in Ceará and Maranhão as useful allies who could help them establish trade with local Indian peoples. Secondly, after the WIC had established a foothold in northeastern Brazil following the invasion of Pernambuco in 1630, Dutch colonial authorities did become increasingly skeptical of employing foreigners as intercultural mediators. Because the Company was a monopolistic organization that aggressively sought to exclude foreign competitors, the former French allies were now seen as rivals rather than allies in the imperial contest over the frontier provinces of northeastern Brazil.65

As the career of the Portuguese Jew Samuel Cohen demonstrates, Dutch colonial authorities only tolerated intercultural mediators when they were perceived as being loyal to the WIC. The Dutch considered Sephardic Jews from the Iberian Peninsula useful intermediaries during their initial phase of overseas expansion during the 1590s and 1600s for several reasons. Because of persecution by the Spanish-controlled Catholic Inquisition in Portugal and elsewhere throughout Habsburg Europe, many Portuguese or

65 For French-Indian relations in the frontier provinces of colonial Brazil, see Hemming, Red Gold, 8-12, 34, 71-72, 166-172(Rio Grande), chapter 10 (Maranhão). A similar amicable relationship and anti-Iberian alliance developed between Dutch traders and English colonists in the Amazon estuary during the early seventeenth century. After the founding of the WIC, this alliance became problematic as the WIC sought to exclude the English. See Joyce Lorimer, English and Irish Settlement on the River Amazon, 1550-1646 (Hakluyt Society Publications, 2nd Series 171), (London: Hakluyt Society, 1989).
Sephardic Jews had sought refuge in the Protestant Low Countries. Even though the Calvinist-controlled WIC was suspicious of Jews for religious reasons, the Heeren XIX and other prominent officials in the Atlantic world generally tolerated the members of the “Portuguese Nation” because of their valuable experience as long-distance merchants and sugar planters in the Iberian overseas world. In addition, since the Sephardic Jews had been subject to ongoing harassment by the Spanish Catholic Church, the fiercely anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish WIC considered the persecuted Jews as reliable allies. When the WIC targeted Pernambuco in 1629, Company officials therefore hoped to make good use of the expertise of Portuguese Jews.66

One of the Portuguese Jews hired by the WIC to aid the Dutch conquest and colonization of Brazil was Samuel Cohen. He is first mentioned in a formal deposition he made before an Amsterdam notary in June 1629, several months before a large WIC fleet departed for Pernambuco. In this deposition Cohen is referred to as “a Portuguese in Amsterdam” who has been employed by the WIC to look for “certain mines of gold, silver, or other minerals” in Brazil. According to a later notarial deposition he made in Amsterdam in 1633, Cohen was 37 years old when he participated in the WIC invasion of Pernambuco in early 1630. Although not much else is known about his background, the WIC interest in Cohen as a miner suggests that he had lived in Brazil before and that he had acquired some expertise in mining or in the exploration of the interior.67

66 This paragraph is primarily based on Williams, “An Atlantic Perspective on the Jewish Struggle.” See also, Ernst Pijning, “New Christians as Sugar Cultivators and Traders in the Portuguese Atlantic, 1450-1800,” in Bernardini and Fiering, eds. The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 485-500.

67 For these notarial depositions, see GAA, NA, Inv. No. 637: folio 201 (June 15, 1629) and Inv. No. 942: folio 737 (August 8, 1633).
Upon arriving in Brazil, Cohen was soon dispatched by the Political Council, the Company government based in Pernambuco, to accompany an expedition to the frontier provinces of Rio Grande and Ceara in October 1631. Desperate to find an opportunity to break out of their encirclement around the coastal town of Olinda in Pernambuco, the Political Council of the WIC organized a special mission in the fall of 1631 to forge a military alliance with the native peoples on the northern frontier who were known for their animosity toward the Portuguese. Because of intelligence from both friendly Indians and intercepted Portuguese correspondence, the Political Council was especially interested in making contact with the “Tapuyas”, a non-Tupi speaking Indian people who strongly resisted Portuguese colonialism. In addition to several Tupi and Tapuya individuals who were taken along as mediators and who will be discussed later, the Company officials also included Cohen in this voyage. In the official orders from the Political Council to commander Elbert Smient aboard the yacht *nieu nederlant*, Smient was instructed to “treat the Indians well, so that they will speak about our Nation with respect.” In addition, Smient was instructed to take aboard “the Portuguese Samuel Cohen who will also be included for this end.” The Council ordered Smient also “to allow the same [Cohen] to stay in the cabin and supply him with provisions.” Granting Cohen the privilege of staying in the ship’s cabin, which was traditionally reserved for officers and persons of high social status clearly, revealed that the WIC considered Cohen a useful individual who should be treated cordially.68

68 See Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 523 for this expedition. For the quotation from the orders to Smient, see DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 49: “Instructions for Captain Ellert Smient, October 1631” (document No. 34). See also *Nederlanders in Brazilie*, 225, note 7.
During the expedition, there is some indirect evidence that Cohen facilitated the communication between the WIC officials and the Indian mediators aboard the *nieu nederlant*. In letters of Smient to the Political Council in Pernambuco written in November 1631, Cohen was one of the four signatories on a statement relating to the accomplishments of the expedition so far. In this letter Smient, Cohen, the merchant J. van Dous, and Adriaen Jorisz Thienpont, the captain of the *nieu nederlant*, testified that they had interrogated some of the recently returned Indian messengers who had attempted to contact their people in the interior of Rio Grande and Ceara. While it is not known what language was used in the interrogation, some of the Indian messengers may have spoken Portuguese, a language in which Cohen was fluent as well. In addition to his services as interpreter between the WIC and Indians, Cohen was probably also included in the expedition to help translate any captured Portuguese correspondence and aid in the interrogation of Portuguese colonists. Finally, because the WIC was eager to find gold or silver mines in the interior of Brazil, Cohen was also included in Smient’s voyage to the northern frontier provinces to collect any information about a possible rich silver mine in Ceara.69

Cohen’s significance as a translator of Portuguese documents became especially clear when he was inadvertently transported back to the Republic sometime in early 1632. Instead of obeying Smient’s orders to wait off the coast of Rio Grande while the

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69 For the document of November 1631, see DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 49: “Extract from the hearing of Andries Tacee and other Brasilians aboard the *Nieu Nederlant*, done by Albert Gerrits, J. van Doust, Samuel Cohen, and Adriaen Joris Thienpont on November 12, 1631.” See also Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 523. Thienpont had already some experience in interacting with Indians from his activities as a captain of a fur trade ship employed in mid-Atlantic North America during the 1610s. See Hart, *Prehistory of New Netherland*, 36, note 4, 37, 53. Perhaps this experience made Thienpont a useful escort on Smient’s mission?
commander went to Olinda in a large sloop to get military reinforcements for a later amphibious attack on Ceara, the captain of the *nieu nederlant*, with Cohen aboard, felt vulnerable to Portuguese attack and quickly dropped off some of the Indian mediators, set sail to the Caribbean to fetch salt, and eventually returned to the United Provinces. The Political Council in Olinda, furious at the captain’s actions, complained to the *Heeren XIX* of the loss of Samuel Cohen, “who was very useful to us in the reading and translation of Portuguese letters.”70

Although the career of Samuel Cohen demonstrated that some experienced intercultural mediators were trusted by the WIC, in most cases the WIC remained highly suspicious of them. The intensely skeptical attitude of colonial Dutch authorities toward intercultural mediators became especially pronounced in the case of Manuel de Moraes. Even though De Moraes provided very valuable information on how to effectively employ the Tupi Indians in Brazil to Dutch officials in Pernambuco, he was never fully trusted by the Dutch. De Moraes’ greatest liability was that he had been a prominent, ordained Jesuit priest in Brazil before changing allegiances to the WIC. Of mixed Indian-Portuguese descent and fluent in the Tupi Indian language, the Sao Paulo-born De Moraes had been appointed by Portuguese colonial officials in 1631 as one of the

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commanders over the Indian troops that supported the Spanish-Portuguese fight against the Dutch invaders.\textsuperscript{71}

Dutch colonial officials came in contact with De Moraes after he surrendered to WIC forces in the province of Paraíba in January 1635. At the time of his capture by WIC soldiers in Paraíba, De Moraes commanded some 1,600 Tupi-speaking Indians. To the surprise of WIC authorities, De Moraes soon renounced his priesthood and Catholicism. Apart from his leadership over the sizable group of Tupis that were with him, De Moraes was especially valuable as an intercultural mediator for the WIC because of his long experience as a missionary and colonial official among the coastal Tupis. Following his sudden rejection of Catholicism, De Moraes quickly provided military and civil WIC authorities with important information about both the coastal Tupis and Portuguese Indian policies. In a meeting with the WIC colonel Crestoffle d’Artischau Arciszweski, a Polish Protestant nobleman, De Moraes gave a detailed account of all the aldeias, or Jesuit mission villages, in the provinces of Rio Grande, Paraíba, Itamaracá, and Pernambuco that had recently come under WIC control. To signify the military usefulness of the aldeias for the Dutch, De Moraes provided the names of Indian headmen as well as a census of all the fighting men in each mission village. In addition, De Moraes pointed out several headmen and their followers who remained loyal to the Portuguese.\textsuperscript{72}

\textsuperscript{71} For a biography of De Moraes, see Dutch in Brazil, 267-269. See also Dauril Alden, The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540-1750 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 209-210.

\textsuperscript{72} On De Moraes having 1,600 Indians with him by the time of his capture, see De Laet, Iaerlyck Verhael, Naber and Warnsinck, eds., (LV) 40, 128. See 129-131 for information about the aldeias and De Moraes’ meeting with Arcizweski. It is not known why De Moraes changed
Despite all this valuable information, Company officials in Pernambuco and the United Provinces remained suspicious of the former Jesuit. More than any other Catholic religious order, Protestant Dutch authorities and ministers feared and hated the Jesuits for their close relationship to the Spanish Crown as well as because of their formal loyalty to the pope. While regular Catholic clergy and even orders such as the Dominicans were allowed to stay in the Brazilian territory controlled by the WIC as long as they did not disturb the Protestant-controlled public order, the Heeren XIX instructed the Political Council in Pernambuco to expel all Jesuits from Brazil in the mid-1630s. Several Jesuit colleagues of De Moraes who were also captured by the Dutch were even subjected to torture before being shipped to Holland. In the light of this intense hatred and suspicion toward Jesuits, it is therefore not surprising that De Moraes was transported to the United Provinces, where he arrived sometime in the summer of 1635.73

At the same time, the Heeren XIX still considered De Moraes useful because of his unique status as an intercultural mediator who had lived among the Tupis for several decades. In a missive to the Political Council dated August 1, 1635, the Heeren XIX forwarded a blueprint for an Indian policy that was written by De Moraes. Although the letter from the Heeren XIX does not indicate what De Moraes exactly suggested, it is

allegiances. In the colorful words of one historian, “Having gone this far, he evidently decided to go the whole hog.” See Dutch in Brazil, 58.

73 On the anti-Jesuit policy of the WIC, see Dutch in Brazil, 57. Reformed Church, 277, argues that the Jesuits were only expelled from Brazil due to directives from the Heeren XIX. In addition, Schalkwijk suggests that De Moraes was trusted by the WIC and invited to travel to the United Provinces by the WIC (Reformed Church, 41). However, in the face of the anti-Jesuit directives issued by WIC officials, it is unlikely that the Heeren XIX would have trusted De Moraes, despite his renouncement of Catholicism. For the torture of Jesuits by the Dutch, see Alden, The Making of an Enterprise, appendix F (680-682). For the close Jesuit relationship to Catholic monarchies and the Vatican, see Alden, The Making of an Enterprise, chapter 1.
likely -- in the light of his previous position as leader of several *aldeias* -- that he urged the adoption of the Portuguese policy of concentrating the Tupis in mission villages. In these *aldeias* the Tupis could not only be controlled and protected from abuse by Portuguese sugar planters, but the centralized mission towns also allowed the WIC to effectively recruit the Indians as military allies or as laborers. Although the missive suggested that De Moraes’ ideas about Indian policies were taken seriously by WIC officials, they instructed the Political Council in Pernambuco to rely on De Moraes’ unstated ideas about Indian policy only in case of an immediate crisis. Reflecting their continuing doubts about De Moraes, the *Heeren XIX* emphasized that they would soon send their own written orders to Brazil outlining Indian policy.\(^7^4\)

After his interrogation in the summer of 1635, the *Heeren XIX*, apparently distrustful, did not make further use of the expertise of the former Jesuit priest. Instead, De Moraes was released into Dutch society where he was allowed to start a new life. During his residence in Leiden, De Moraes provided information about Brazil and its peoples to Joannes de Laet, the previously mentioned scholar and prominent supporter of the WIC. After having been married twice to Dutch women, De Moraes returned to Pernambuco in 1643 where he pursued a career as a trader in Brazilwood. The *Heeren XIX* must have felt vindicated in their suspicions toward De Moraes when the latter renounced his allegiance to the Dutch after Portuguese rebels captured him in the summer of 1645. However, this time it was the Portuguese who did not trust De Moraes. He was soon shipped to Lisbon where the Catholic Inquisition subjected him to a trial. After

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\(^7^4\) For this correspondence, see DNA, OWIC, Inv. No. 8: Copybook of Letters send by the *Heeren XIX* to the Political Council in Pernambuco, 1629-1642: Letter of August 1, 1635.
spending several years in prison, De Moraes was eventually freed because of his weak health.\textsuperscript{75}

Like the careers of Cayonen, Da Costa, and Rodriguez, the ordeal of De Moraes revealed that the Dutch viewed most foreign intercultural mediators as untrustworthy. Because they were seen as strangers who did not share a close affiliation with either Dutch society or Protestantism, this group of cross-cultural negotiators never escaped suspicion. While some of them, such as Samuel Cohen, were considered reliable because of their anti-Catholicism, most interpreters and translators familiar with the Atlantic world and employed by Dutch navigators and traders in the early seventeenth century, found only brief employment.

5. Conclusion

While Dutch-Indian relations in Brazil were shaped by the Portuguese-Dutch conflict, intercultural encounters in mid-Atlantic North America were largely based on the material exchange of furs and manufactured goods. Despite these different contexts of intercultural contact, the Dutch used similar linguistic strategies to establish reliable and trustworthy communication with the native peoples in both regions. Dutch navigators and traders initially attempted to communicate with native peoples by using gestures and signs. However, since neither the Dutch nor Indians had established uniform rules for sign language, misunderstandings frequently occurred. While gestures were valuable for simple economic exchanges, they were less useful for more sophisticated intercultural conversations and councils. Non-verbal forms of communication provided plentiful

\textsuperscript{75} De Moraes probably died in 1651. See Dutch in Brazil, 267-269; and Alden, The Making of an Enterprise, 210.
opportunities for manipulation and also revealed the possibilities for misunderstanding and cultural conflict between the Dutch and Indians in Brazil and North America.

To improve relations, the Dutch employed linguistic middlemen in their encounters with indigenous peoples. Although these individuals were often very valuable because of their specialized intercultural skills, the Dutch also doubted the loyalties of these foreigners, and therefore made very limited use of them. During the early 1630s, the WIC desperately sought out Brazilian Indian allies in its campaign against the Portuguese and their Indian and African allies. Company officials therefore had to look for better modes of communication and for more trustworthy individuals to broker an alliance with the native peoples of the frontier provinces of northeastern Brazil. Likewise, for Dutch traders and navigators operating in mid-Atlantic North America, the dependence on individuals such as Juan Rodriguez and Mathieu da Costa demonstrated that other modes of linguistic contact were necessary in that region as well. However, as the failed experiments with experienced linguistic middlemen had shown, finding reliable intercultural mediators was not going to be an easy task.
Sometime in the summer of 1631 the *Heeren XIX*, the executive board of nineteen directors of the Dutch West India Company in the United Provinces, received a letter from the Company headquarters in Pernambuco in northeastern Brazil. The letter informed the *Heeren XIX* about attempts of Indian peoples in the frontier province of Rio Grande to form an alliance with the Dutch against the Portuguese colonists. What was unusual about the letter was that Pieter Poty, a prominent leader and spokesman of the Potiguar Indians, had written and signed it. In addition, the letter was written in Dutch rather than in Poty’s native Tupi language. Poty related how he both had interrogated an Indian envoy named “Marica Latira” and had traveled the long distance from Rio Grande to Pernambuco to supply the Dutch with intelligence about a recently-made truce between the “Tapeuia” and the “Pepetama” Indians. The two peoples had agreed “to wage war against the Portuguese and their allies.” Despite the enormous linguistic and cultural differences between the Brazilian Indians and the Dutch, Poty’s expertise as an intercultural diplomat clearly revealed that both sides were able to effectively communicate and establish political ties with each other.76

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76 Poty’s letter can be found in DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 49: Letter from Pieter Poty to the *Heeren XIX*, undated (spring 1631).
Three years later, in the winter of 1634-1635, the Dutch barber-surgeon Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert made an arduous journey to several Mohawk and Oneida Indian villages in what is now upstate-New York. Van den Bogaert and two companions had set out from Fort Orange, a fortified West India Company post nearby present-day Albany, in an effort to improve Dutch-Indian relations following a decline in trade and a rise in intercultural tensions. While Van den Bogaert and his two colleagues were able to collect many words and phrases for a Mohawk-Dutch vocabulary that was useful for facilitating economic exchange, the three Dutch envoys lacked the skills to function as intercultural diplomats. After Oneida men and women in one village formally welcomed Van den Bogaert, a prominent native leader asked the Dutchman “what we [the Dutch] were doing in his country and what we brought him for gifts.” Reflecting Dutch ignorance of Indian diplomatic protocol to exchange gifts to establish alliances, Van den Bogaert replied, “that we brought him nothing, but that we just came for a visit.” Insulted by this answer, the unnamed Oneida leader told the Dutch envoys “that we were worth nothing because we brought him no gifts.” Ironically, although the three Dutchmen were able to communicate with the Indians and even create a Mohawk wordlist, Van den Bogaert and his men simultaneously demonstrated that they were unable to practice intercultural diplomacy. 77

Poty’s letter and Van den Bogaert’s expedition clearly revealed that, when it came to Dutch-Indian communication and diplomacy, there were major differences between

77 Van den Bogaert kept a diary of his expedition that is considered one of the first ethnographic documents about the Iroquois. A good translation and edition of this diary is provided by A Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country, 1634-1635: The Journal of Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert trans. and eds. by Charles T. Gehring and William A. Starna, wordlist and linguistic notes by Gunther Michelson (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1988). For the incident with the Oneida leader, see 13. For the wordlist see 51-65.
Dutch-Indian communication and diplomacy in northeastern Brazil and mid-Atlantic North America. While Poty’s letter suggested that some Brazilian Indians learned Dutch well enough that they could correspond with metropolitan officials in Europe, Van den Bogaert’s mission demonstrated that the Dutch in North America were forced to adapt to Indian languages and diplomatic customs when dealing with native peoples. In this chapter I will explain how and why intercultural communication and diplomacy in these two colonial frontiers developed along such different trajectories.

In doing so I argue that the differences were not necessarily caused by linguistic problems but by the contexts of cross-cultural contact in each frontier. In northeastern Brazil, some native peoples were willing to send their kinsmen to the United Provinces to forge a stronger political alliance with the Dutch against the Portuguese. WIC officials saw the Tupi-speaking Potiguar diplomats as valuable mediators because the latter learned the Dutch language and adopted aspects of Protestantism. In contrast to the Brazilian Indians, the native peoples of mid-Atlantic North America did not show any interest in going to the Republic for an education as intercultural mediators. Although cross-cultural commerce provided some common ground between the Indians and Dutch in North America, the natives forced the Dutch to learn Indian languages and diplomatic customs rather than the other way around.

1. Indian Translators for New Netherland

Although Dutch navigators and traders continued to employ linguistic middlemen as intercultural diplomats, they increasingly realized the need for more reliable go-betweens. To improve the reliability of cross-cultural negotiators, Dutch colonizers took
natives to the United Provinces for training as interpreters. Most likely, the Dutch adopted from the Portuguese, Spanish, French, and English the practice of taking aboriginal peoples to the Low Countries. These European nations had resorted to this policy since at least the fifteenth century when Portuguese seafarers took West African natives to the Iberian Peninsula. Because of the extensive commercial relations between Dutch and other European merchants, it would have been strange if Dutch businessmen and officials had not heard or read about the experiments of taking natives from various parts of the world to Europe. In addition, several non-Europeans, such as Inuits from Labrador, had been brought to the Netherlands by English ships during the 1560s as human curiosities to be viewed by the Dutch public. Although the parading of indigenous individuals at fairs and other public spaces was primarily intended to satisfy European demands for the exotic “Other,” the example of the Inuits implied that the Dutch were familiar with aboriginal persons shown around across Europe several decades before the Dutch initiated their own voyages to Asia, Africa, and the Americas.78

By instructing qualified Native Americans in the Dutch language and customs, the Dutch would not only improve communication with the indigenous peoples but would also strengthen relations with the various Indian groups in North America and Brazil. The

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latter goal was especially important for Dutch merchants who were concerned with the risks of making transactions with foreigners and strangers. Because of the many uncertainties involved with long-distance trade, Dutch merchants attempted to secure reliable and trustworthy relations with strangers by incorporating them as friends into their mercantile networks. In establishing a reciprocal relationship with a stranger, a group of Dutch merchants hoped to ensure a reliable relationship with this person over a long period of time. By exchanging favors and services with this stranger, the Dutch entrepreneurs expected that this person would eventually reciprocate in a similar way. It is in this context that we should see Dutch attempts to take Indians from North America and Brazil to the Republic. By training natives in the Low Countries, Dutch traders and officials hoped to turn the Indians, who were linguistically and culturally different, into reliable partners whom they could trust.

In addition, by bringing Indians to the Low Countries, the Dutch could impress Native Americans with the civilization and military power of the Republic. Finally, during the Indians’ stay in Europe, the Dutch hosts could introduce their American guests to the “true Christian religion.” In doing so, Dutch Calvinists expected that the Indian interpreters, upon returning to their homelands, would not only function as mediators in diplomatic and economic settings, but also as religious instructors to their own peoples. At the same time, the Dutch could only accomplish these ambitious objectives if the Indians themselves cooperated. Without native support, the program of educating Indians as reliable interpreters was doomed to fail. Indian responses therefore determined whether the Dutch attempts to educate natives in the Republic would be successful.
The Dutch had already applied the aggressive linguistic policy of training natives in Europe during their first overseas expeditions in the late sixteenth century. In this period Dutch ships had carried several individuals from Southeast Asia, Africa, and also South America to the Republic to prepare them for an education as interpreters. When Dutch navigators brought back with them to the United Provinces two native men from mid-Atlantic North America sometime in the early 1610s, the Dutch thus already had experience with the education of non-Europeans as intercultural liaisons. Unfortunately, we have only very fragmented documentary evidence about these two Indians. In Nicolaes van Wassenaer’s *Historisch Verhael* or “Historical Journal,” a sort of newspaper that reported national and international events, there is twice a curious reference to “two sons of the most prominent leader,” taken to Amsterdam from mid-Atlantic North America by the experienced navigators Adriaen Block and Hendrick Christiaensen sometime before 1615. In the first reference published in December 1624, Van Wassenaer refers to the two Indian brothers as “very crude men but adapt enough at knavish tricks.” Several months later, in April 1625, Wassenaer mentions, “The two young men brought hither by Adriaen Block were named Orsou and Valentijn. This Orsou was a thoroughly wicked man, and upon returning to his home-land, he was the cause for the death of Hendrick Christiaensen; however, Orsou was appropriately punished for this with a bullet.”

79 Nicolaes van Wassenaer, *Historisch Verhael aller Ghedenckwaerdigher Geschiedenissen* 21 vols. (Amsterdam: Jan Jansen, 1622-1635). For the references to the two Indian brothers, see volume 8, December 1624: page 85, and volume 9, April 1625: page 44. There is also an English translation of the excerpts from Wassenaer in *NNN*, 78, 81, but some passages and words are incorrectly translated by Jameson. For examples of indigenous people from Madagascar and the Indonesian Spice Islands taken to the Dutch Republic in the 1590s and 1600s, see G.M.J.M. Koolen, *Een seer bequaem middel: Onderwijs en Kerk onder de 17e-Eeuwse VOC* (Kerk en Theologie in Context 19), (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1993), 91.
Recent research has taken a critical look at Wassenaer’s colorful account because the names Orsou and Valentijn, far from being traditional Algonquian or Iroquoian names, refer to the two main characters of a popular European chivalry romance. Since Orsou was portrayed as the archetypical naked and wild man in this European novel or folk-tale about two noble brothers, Wassenaer probably transposed the well-known story of Orsou and Valentijn onto two real or fictive Indian brothers as a way of helping Dutch audiences make sense of the recently encountered native peoples of mid-Atlantic North America. Significantly, the Native American inhabitants of North America were often referred to as wilden in contemporary Dutch accounts. What also raises doubts is that Wassenaer’s story is the only documentary piece of evidence we have of the two Indian brothers in the Low Countries. Although Block and Christiaensen are frequently mentioned in Amsterdam notarial depositions, no reference at this time has been uncovered from the Amsterdam notarial archive relating to two North American Indian brothers taken to the Low Countries in the second decade of the seventeenth century.  

Although Wassenaer’s description is cryptic and vague, his account is corroborated by an account that was published in Germany in 1615, which indicates that the two North American Indians were taken to the Republic shortly before that year. In an obscure publication by J. Francus, a reference is made to the recent arrival in Amsterdam

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of “some Dutch ships which had discovered a new country beyond Virginia and not far from New France, which they named New Holland, bringing with them from there two of the natives.” Since J. Francus wrote about the two unidentified North American Indians independently from Wassenaer, Valentijn and Orsou were probably based on actual historical characters.

In addition, Wassenaer, who is generally considered a reliable source of contemporary Dutch, European, and overseas affairs, makes mention of other native persons taken to the Republic to be trained as interpreters. For instance, in the installment of the “Historical Journal” of December 1623, Wassenaer discusses a “Captain of the wilden,” from the Wyapoko River Valley in South America “who has lived in Holland in Hoorn for sometime, and who speaks good Dutch.” In the previously mentioned issue of April 1625, Van Wassenaer refers as well to two natives from the Davis Strait in Canada who were transported to the town of Schiedam in the province of Holland in 1624. One native quickly succumbed to disease but the other was presented as an exotic curiosity to the stadholder Prince Maurits of Nassau at his court in The Hague. These detailed instances clearly reveal that Wassenaer did not consider the taking of natives to the United Provinces as unusual. Wassenaer had probably heard about Valentijn and Orsou from Dutch sailors and navigators who had visited North America and taken the two Native Americans to Europe.

81 For the reference by J. Francus, see I.N. Phelps Stokes, ed., The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909, (New York: 1915-1928), volume 4: 42. The original title of Francus’ work is Historische Beschreibung aller denckwurdigen Historien... (Frankfurt am Main, 1615).

82 On these two examples of Native Americans visiting the Republic, see Van Wassenaer, Historisch Verhael, volume 6: 69 (Wyapoko Indian); volume 9: 43, 124 (Davis Strait natives).
While the ethnic identity of the two Indian brothers is unknown, historian Daniel Richter several years ago suggested that the two natives were Mahicans who were taken to the United Provinces following a meeting between the Mahicans and a Dutch delegation led by captain Hendrick Christiaensen and fur trader Adriaen Block in 1613. According to Richter, after Christiaensen and Block returned to the Republic with the two Indians, they left behind a Dutchman named Jacob Eelkens “with the Mahicans to ensure the safe return of their leader’s sons.” Although Richter admits that there is no documentary evidence for this assertion, he persuasively points out that Eelkens was appointed as the first commander of the permanent fortified outpost named Fort Nassau that was established on the lands of the Mahicans in the upper Hudson River in 1614. Since Eelkens “quite likely had acquired some previous experience in the Indian trade,” it is very probable that he had stayed behind with the Mahicans in the winter of 1613-1614, prior to the founding of Fort Nassau. By remaining among the Mahicans Eelkens would not only have ensured the Mahicans that the two Mahican sons taken to Holland were not going to be harmed, but also would have been able to become acquainted with the language and culture of the Mahicans. Significantly, this policy of exchanging individuals was not unusual but was widely used by Indians and Europeans in other parts throughout colonial America to ensure good-will and to facilitate intercultural communication.83

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Unfortunately, the Dutch experiment in training North American Indians as interpreters in the Republic was a failure. No mention is ever made in the available Dutch documents of the Dutch using the expertise of native liaisons trained in the United Provinces. It is not known why the two Indians taken to the United Provinces were unwilling or unable to function as liaisons for the Dutch. Perhaps both individuals quickly died after their trans-Atlantic voyages. From other cases of natives taken to Europe, we know that many indigenous persons died after being exposed to unfamiliar pathogens. For instance, one of the two Inuits taken to the Republic in 1624 quickly died of a disease upon arriving in the town of Schiedam.84

Another possibility is that the two Indians were traumatized or shocked by their stay in Europe and refused to have anything to do with the Dutch upon returning to their homelands. Significantly, from other instances of Indians who had been educated in Europe, we know that some of them exacted violent revenge against their former hosts once they got back to their native communities. In this respect it is significant to note that Wassenaer in 1625 reported that Orsou was personally responsible for the death of Christiaensen. While it is not known if and how this happened, an Amsterdam notarial record from 1619 perhaps sheds light on this mysterious episode. According to this

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84 For the high mortality rate of Indians taken to Europe, see Frances Karttunen, “Interpreters Snatched from the Shore: The Successful and the Others,” in Gray and Fiering, eds., The Language Encounter in the Americas, 222.
notarial deposition, unidentified Indians attacked a Dutch trading vessel named *Swarte Beer* (“Black Bear”) under the command of Hendrick Christiaensens somewhere near New York Bay in 1619. The document describes how Indians successfully surprised the crew of experienced Dutch fur traders and killed almost all of them, including Christiaensens. Although it remains speculation, a case can be made that Orsou, upon returning from the United Provinces, lured Christiaensens and his men into a deadly ambush. If Orsou was indeed involved, it helps explain why the Dutch did not attempt again to take North American Indians to their country for training as interpreter.  

Whatever the motivations might have been for the death of Christiaensens, the unwillingness of the two Indians taken to the United Provinces to become interpreters for the Dutch strongly indicated that the native peoples of mid-Atlantic North America wanted to keep the Dutch at arms’ length. At the same time, the refusal of the two North American natives to adopt the Dutch language and customs does not necessarily imply that the indigenous peoples along the mid-Atlantic American coast were not interested in establishing close relations with the Dutch. On the contrary, by actively rejecting being taken to Europe, the Indians primarily demonstrated that the Dutch visitors would have had to learn native languages and customs, rather than the natives learning Dutch. 

This attitude of refusing to learn Dutch while persuading the Dutch to adopt Indian language and diplomatic customs was vividly revealed by the case of Kleyntjen’s

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85 For this notary record, see Phelps Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, volume 6: 5-6. For instances of native interpreters who turned against their former captors, see Karttunen, “Interpreters Snatched from the Shore,” 222-223.

expedition. Just as Christiaensen brought two Indians to the United Provinces in order to train them as interpreters, some North American natives experimented with cross-cultural communication strategies as well. When an exploring and trading expedition led by the Dutchman Kleyntjen traveled from Fort Nassau into the interior sometime in 1615, they were captured by a group of “Minquas” or Susquehannocks somewhere along the Delaware River Valley. Although the sources regarding this episode are scarce, all the available evidence suggests that the Iroquoian-speaking Susquehannocks took Kleyntjen and his two comrades hostage in the expectation that the three Dutchmen would provide useful information to them. Because the Susquehannocks lived in the interior, away from the main waterways used by Dutch traders, the capture of the three explorers enabled the Susquehannocks to learn more about the Dutch and to obtain direct access to their valuable material goods. In addition, since Northeastern American Indians often incorporated prisoners into their communities, it is probable that the three Dutchmen were also captured in a deliberate attempt to use them as future interpreters and liaisons in relations with Europeans.87

However, the Susquehannock experiment with Dutch intermediaries was short-lived. The Dutch quickly dispatched the experienced trader Cornelis Hendricksz to the Susquehannocks to ransom his countrymen. Signifying that they desired access to European trade goods, the Susquehannocks eventually released Kleyntjen and his

comrades after Hendricksz paid them “kettles, beads, and other merchandise.”

Hendricksz was very eager to obtain the release of Kleyntjen and his men, because they were experienced in the trade with the “Maquas [Mohawks] and Machicans” around Fort Nassau. Losing these valuable traders, who were probably familiar with native language and customs, to the Susquehannocks would have been detrimental to the Dutch. While the Dutch were also concerned that some of their own people were kept as hostages by non-Christian peoples, the Dutch were primarily upset with the Susquehannocks because the latter had taken Kleyntjen and his comrades without Dutch permission. As the case of Jacob Eelkens and the two Indian brothers indicated, the Dutch were not averse to leaving behind some of their own people, as long as the Dutch would be able to take native hostages with them as well. Dutch navigators and merchants operating in mid-Atlantic North America consequently viewed the Susquehannock’s action as an intolerable kidnapping.88

As the ransom of Kleyntjen suggests, for the Dutch it was clearly unacceptable for natives to control intercultural contacts. Like the refusal of the two Indian brothers to be trained as intercultural diplomats in the United Provinces, the Dutch irritation about the Susquehannock capture of Kleyntjen dramatically demonstrated that the Indians and the Dutch were suspicious of each other and that the cultural divide between both groups was wide.

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2. Indian Translators for Brazil

In contrast to the failed experiment with North American Indians, the Dutch were much more successful in training Brazilian Indians as intercultural liaisons in the Republic. Significantly, in northeastern Brazil it was the natives themselves who requested to be taken to Europe rather than the Dutch forcing the Indians on a trans-Atlantic journey. As the example of the Potiguar Indian liaisons reveals, native peoples sometimes took the initiative to be taken to Europe in order to forge diplomatic alliances. Brazilian Indians asked to be taken to Europe during the previously mentioned visit of a WIC fleet under the command of admiral Boudewijn Hendriksz to the coast of the province of Paraíba in the summer of 1625. During their visit, the Dutch soon came in contact with local Potiguars who professed great friendship. According to Joannes de Laet, who had access to a report of the expedition that is now lost, “the Brazilians [the Indians] who were living in the vicinity came to our men and offered them their services against the Portuguese, whose rule they could not bear.” Some fifty Potiguar men and boys subsequently accompanied a WIC contingent during an intelligence gathering and foraging expedition into the interior of Paraíba.89

While the Dutch were grateful for and impressed with the Potiguar hospitality, the Potiguars considered the unexpected WIC visit to be a unique opportunity to establish an anti-Portuguese alliance with the Dutch. As we have seen in a previous chapter, many Potiguars throughout northeastern Brazil had strongly resisted Portuguese attempts to integrate them into colonial society. To successfully defend themselves against the

89 For this episode, see De Laet, Iaerlyck Verhael, Naber, ed. (LV 34), 85-92. For the quote see 90-91.
Portuguese, the Potiguars had frequently made military alliances with French visitors who wished to obtain precious timber and other natural resources in Brazil. Although the Potiguar-French alliance had significantly declined by the early seventeenth century in the face of several Portuguese and Spanish military campaigns, a considerable number of Potiguars in the provinces of Paraíba and Rio Grande were still willing to put up armed resistance against Iberian colonial authorities. When the large fleet of 25 WIC vessels filled with well-armed soldiers disembarked in Paraíba in 1625, the Potiguars therefore probably concluded that their French allies had returned.

However, after a stay of several weeks, the Dutch made preparations to leave Paraíba. Unfortunately for the Potiguars, the Heeren XIX had ordered admiral Hendricksz to raid Spanish shipping and outposts in the Caribbean rather than establishing a beachhead in northeastern Brazil. While we don’t know in what language the Dutch and Potiguars communicated, it is likely that Portuguese was used as a means of communication. Since the French had been frequent visitors to the area, it is possible that some Potiguars spoke French as well. In any case, the WIC officials realized that leaving Paraíba would expose the Potiguars, “who had shown so much hostility against the Portuguese in the hope that we would stay,” to severe reprisals by the Portuguese and Spanish. Nevertheless, Hendricksz and his fellow officers concluded, “it was better to focus on other goals, that had been ordered,” and to have “the Brazilians take care of themselves as much as possible.” Upon learning of the Dutch plans, the Potiguars “were very perplexed, because they could guess what would happen,” to them if the Portuguese learned that the WIC fleet had left Paraíba.

90 For these quotations, see De Laet, Iaerlyck Verhael, Naber, ed. (LV 34), 91-92.
It was in this context of fear for Portuguese reprisals that the Potiguars persuaded the Dutch to take aboard several of their people. According to Joannes de Laet, initially all the Potiguars present wanted to go aboard the WIC fleet, but Hendricksz refused this because there were not enough victuals on the ships. Eventually “a few were taken aboard while most of them [the Potiguars] sought refuge.” Although De Laet does neither report the reaction of the Potiguars nor the names of the Indians that were actually brought on the ships, the Potiguars carefully selected a number of prominent and experienced individuals who were familiar with Europeans. Significantly, from other Dutch sources reporting about the Potiguars taken to the Republic, we know that there were at least thirteen Brazilian Indians who arrived in the Republic. From these thirteen there are six whose names strongly indicate some previous form of contact with the Portuguese. In two Dutch documents dating from the late 1620s six Potiguars from northeastern Brazil are mentioned as being in the Republic with the following names: “Caspar Paraupaba, of Ceara, 60 years old,” “Andreus Francisco, of Ceara, 50 years old,” “Pieter Poty, 20 years old” “Antonio Guirawassauay, of Paraíba, 30 years old,” “Antonio Francisco” and “Luis Caspar.” Except for the Tupi sounding names of “Paraupaba,” “Poty,” and “Guirawassauay,” all their first and last names clearly suggest that they were baptized by Catholic missionaries prior to the arrival of the WIC fleet in Paraíba. While their baptism by Jesuit or other missionaries does not offer proof in itself that they had mastered the ability to speak Portuguese, it is very likely that they had received some rudimentary instruction in reading and writing from Catholic missionaries.91

91 On the Indians going aboard the WIC fleet, see De Laet, *Iaerlyck Verhael*, Naber, ed. (LV 34), 91-92. For the names of the six Potiguars, see Bondam, “Journeaux et Nouvelles Tirées,” 171-177 (document dated March 20, 1628), and the anonymous, *Beschrijvinge van de Custen van Brasil, en verder zuidelijk tot Rio de la Plata; toestand der forten, enz. Getrokken uit...*
The names of these six Indians show that all were men, indicating that the Potiguars considered their stay on the WIC fleet an attempt to forge diplomatic relations. After all, in Tupi Indian culture, diplomacy was an all-male domain not accessible to women. The Indian names also provide some interesting information about the status and family relations of the Potiguar delegation that went aboard the Dutch ships. First of all, Caspar Paraupaba was probably the father of “Antonio Guirawassauay”. From later WIC correspondence we know that one Antonio Paraupaba had been a member of the Potiguar delegation that had visited the Republic in the second half of the 1620s. Although Antonio Paraupaba is not mentioned in the two Dutch documents, it is possible that the individual named “Antonio Guirawassauay” was in fact the same as Antonio Paraupaba. The Dutch scholar B.N. Teensma has recently argued that the Tupi name “Guirawassauay” was linguistically synonymous with the name “Paraupaba.” Moreover, the presence of a father and son in the Potiguar delegation strongly suggests that Caspar and Antonio belonged to a family of prominent headmen. As recent scholarship has persuasively shown, a considerable number of native leaders traveled to Europe in the early modern period. Secondly, the name “Poty”, which means “shrimp” in the Tupi language, was the equivalent of the Portuguese name “Camarão.” Since the name Camarão was a prominent hereditary family name within the Potiguar polity and because there is documentary evidence that Pieter Poty was a close relative of a notable Potiguar

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*scheepsjournalen, officiële verklaringe enz. van 1624-1637* (Undated Manuscript, John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island), Ms-Codex Dutch 1, folios 11-14. The anonymous manuscript also argues that there were a total of thirteen Brazilian Indians in the United Provinces in the 1620s.
headman named Filipe Camarão, Pieter Poty was most likely also a headman or prominent leader.92

The thirteen or more Potiguars who boarded the WIC ships in Paraíba were therefore a carefully selected group of Indian headmen, diplomats, and orators who specifically traveled or were sent to the Republic to make a closer alliance with the Dutch. It is unknown how Hendricksz and his fellow-officers interpreted the presence of the Potiguars on their ships, but since the Dutch were already familiar with taking non-Europeans to the United Provinces it is likely that they considered the Potiguars as indigenous envoys who could be used for the benefit of the WIC in a future invasion of Brazil. While nothing is known about the trans-Atlantic journey of the Potiguars to Europe, De Laet does mention that a fast-sailing WIC yacht named 't Tortelduyfken ("Turtledove") set sail to the Republic in early August 1625 to inform the Heeren XIX about the friendly encounter with the Potiguars in Paraíba. Since the WIC fleet soon went on a privateering expedition in the Caribbean and West Africa, it is possible that

92 This paragraph is based on: Nederlanders in Brazilie, 37, 205 (editorial notes by B.N. Teensma about the similarity between the names of “Paraupaba” and “Guirawassauay”). On Antonio Paraupaba in the Republic together with Pieter Poty, see for instance DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 59: Missive from the WIC Government in Recife to the Heeren XIX, May 10, 1644. See also chapter three of the dissertation. For the importance of the name “Poty” and “Camarão”, see José Antônio Gonsalves de Mello, D. Antônio Filipe Camarão: Capitão-Mor dos índios da costa do nordeste do brasil (Recife: Universidade do Recife, 1954), 13-17 (evidence of Potiguar leaders in the sixteenth century carrying the name “Camarão”). See also Ronaldo Vainfás, Dicionário do Brasil colonial, 1500-1808 (Rio de Janeiro, 2000): entries on “Pedro Poti” (476-477) and “Felipe Camarão” (224-225). Throughout the dissertation I have opted for the spelling “Poty” rather than “Poti”. Most scholars argue that Poty and Camarão were cousins but this is not entirely clear from the available documents. It is probable that European observers unfamiliar with the Tupi kinship system misinterpreted the actual relationship between the two Potiguar leaders. For other examples of native leaders who traveled to Europe, see for instance, Michael Leroy Oberg, “Between ‘Savage Man’ and ‘Most Faithful Englishman’: Manteo and the Early Anglo-Indian Exchange, 1584-1590,” Itinerario 34, no. 2 (2000), 149.
Hendricksz put the Potiguar envoys on ‘t Tortelduyfken to be sure that the Heeren XIX would soon be able to see and speak to the Brazilian Indians themselves.\(^93\)

While the sources relating to the stay of the thirteen Potiguars in the Republic are sketchy, the available documentation strongly suggests that the Heeren XIX initiated an extensive and ambitious plan to train the Brazilian Indians as interpreters and providers of intelligence for a future invasion of Brazil. According to an anonymous report written sometime in the 1630s, the Heeren XIX instructed the WIC Chamber of Amsterdam to take care of the education of eight Potiguars while five others were taken under the wings of the WIC Chamber of Groningen, a city in the north of the Republic. Within the decentralized WIC organization there were a total of five autonomous Chambers, each of which represented a particular city or region in the United Provinces that had invested capital in the WIC. For reasons that remain unclear, the Heeren XIX ordered the Chambers of Amsterdam and Groningen to finance the stay of the Tupi Indian delegation in the Republic.\(^94\)

An unknown number of Potiguars eventually learned the Dutch language, making them indispensable as intercultural mediators in future WIC contacts with Brazilian Indians. In a 1640 French edition of his *Nieuwe Werelt ofte Beschrijvinghe van West-Indien* (“New World, or Description of West-India”), an encyclopedic work about the natural resources, civilizations, and peoples of the Americas, De Laet reported that the

\(^{93}\) On the yacht ‘t Tortelduyfken being dispatched to Republic, see De Laet, *Iaerlyck Verhael*, Naber, ed. (LV 34), 93.

Potiguars who visited the Republic “have learned our language and learned how to write it.” Although the Dutch language must have been very hard to learn for the Tupi-speaking Potiguars, there were some important factors that enabled the Indians to establish some proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing Dutch. First, the Potiguars were primarily young men eager to establish an alliance with the Dutch. In short, they were motivated to learn the language of their hosts. Secondly, as mentioned previously, the Potiguars who visited the Republic were not unfamiliar with Europeans. Because of their Catholic baptismal names it is very likely that the Brazilian Indian envoys already spoke some Portuguese and perhaps even some French due to the frequent French visits to the Potiguars. Thirdly, the Potiguars were transplanted to a new culture where no one, except for their own companions, spoke the Tupi language. Since they were split up in two smaller groups the incentive to learn Dutch must therefore have been great for the Indians. Finally, because the Brazilian Indian envoys lived in the Republic from approximately the fall of 1625 until the WIC invasion of Pernambuco in the early spring of 1630, the Potiguars had no less than five years to master the Dutch language. In a letter from the Heeren XIX written in October 1631, the Potiguar envoys were referred to as “having lived here with content for several years and having become acquainted with our laws, government, and our nation.” While not all of the thirteen Potiguars probably became fluent in Dutch, some must have established a considerable ability to speak, read, and write in Dutch over a period of five years.95

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95 For the quote from De Laet, see his L'Histoire du Nouveau Monde ou description des Indes Occidentales (Leiden: Elzeviers, 1640), 539-540. The letter from the Heeren XIX can be found in DNA, OWIC, Inv. No. 8: Copybook of Letters sent by the Heeren XIX, 1629-1642: letter dated October 31, 1631. For a similar argument that natives could in fact learn a European language while overseas, see Alden T. Vaughan, “Sir Walter Ralegh’s Indian Interpreters, 1584-1618,” WMQ 59, no. 2 (April 2002): 341-376.
The willingness of the Potiguars to establish an alliance with the Dutch was also expressed by the conversion of some Brazilian Indians to Protestant Christianity. According to De Laet, the Potiguars had “been instructed in the principles of the Christian religion” during their stay in the Republic. Although it is impossible to reconstruct the specific religious motivations of the Potiguars for embracing Dutch Calvinism due to a lack of sources, for the Indians visiting the Republic adopting the public religion of their hosts was an important way of strengthening bonds with their Dutch allies. Since the Potiguars, six of whom had baptismal names, readily identified the Portuguese with Catholicism, the Potiguars must have seen the theologically and ritualistically different Calvinistic religion as closely associated with the Dutch and the WIC. Some Potiguars may also have adopted Protestantism in an effort to tap into the perceived military and technological power of the Dutch. Like other European powers, the Dutch probably also attempted to impress foreign visitors with the military and economic might of the Dutch by taking their guests to military installations or to commercial towns.96

Dutch authorities were greatly impressed by and hopeful about the education of the Potiguars and their interest in Protestant Christianity. The WIC alliance with the Potiguars was considered so useful for the Dutch that stadholder Frederik Hendrik (1584-1647) had hung a painting in his palace in The Hague that depicted the friendly encounter between the Potiguars and the Dutch in Paraíba in 1625. This now lost painting was displayed with other thematic paintings celebrating Dutch power in the great hall of the palace to impress domestic and foreign visitors with the recent successes of Dutch

96 For the quote, see De Laet, L'Histoire du Nouveau Monde, 539-540. Like Ralegh’s Indian interpreters in England, the Potiguars also embraced Protestantism to strengthen the political alliance with Europeans, see Vaughan, “Ralegh’s Indian Interpreters,” 372.
overseas expansion and prominence on the world stage. Similarly, for Dutch Protestants, the Indian interest in Calvinism was strong evidence that non-Christian peoples rejected Catholicism and instead embraced the “true Christian religion”. Realizing the great potential of the Potiguar envoys to function as missionaries to their own people, the *Heeren XIX* subsequently supported a plan to prepare the Brazilian Indian envoys for a career as Calvinist catechists. In 1628, the WIC reportedly informed stadholder Frederik Hendrik that it was training some of the Potiguaras as missionaries in the Republic. Significantly, the Dutch Calvinist effort to educate native catechists was not limited to Brazil but was also extended to other overseas regions. For instance, in an attempt to forge a stronger alliance with the anti-Portuguese principal rulers of the Indonesian Spice Islands, the Dutch East India Company took several native children of prominent island rulers to the United Provinces where they received an education as Calvinist catechists during the 1620s.97

Although zealous Protestants within the WIC were excited about the conversion of the Potiguars to Calvinism, the *Heeren XIX* were primarily interested in employing the Brazilian Indians as providers of information and as liaisons between the WIC and the Indian peoples during a future WIC invasion of northeastern Brazil. As we have seen, after the Dutch were driven from Salvador de Bahia in the spring of 1625, the *Heeren XIX* were eager to organize a new attack on the sugar provinces of northeastern Brazil. In

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97 For the painting, see Zandvliet, *Mapping for Money*, 243-244. According to Zandvliet, a copy of the original painting still exists; see 296, note 88. On some of the Potiguaras being trained as native missionaries and the WIC correspondence with Frederik Hendrik, see *Reformed Church in Brazil*, 169. Hendrik succeeded Prince Maurits as main stadholder upon Maurits’ death in 1625. For the example of the education of the children of native children of the Spice Islands, see “Het internationale podium,” in Kees Zandvliet, ed. *Maurits Prins van Oranje* (Amsterdam and Zwolle: Rijksmuseum and Waanders, 2000), 379-380 (number 214).
order to ensure that this invasion would be more successful than the short-lived occupation of Salvador de Bahia, the Heeren XIX wanted as much information about the region as possible. While Dutch navigators and merchants familiar with the Southern Atlantic sugar trade provided a wealth of detail about Brazilian harbors and Atlantic sailing directions, the Potiguar envoys in the Republic supplied useful information to the Heeren XIX about the strength of the Iberian forces in the northeast as well as detailed intelligence concerning the native peoples in the area.

On March 20, 1628, six of the thirteen Potiguars attended a hearing with Kiliaen van Rensselaer, a prominent bewindhebber or director of the Amsterdam Chamber of the WIC. Although it is not known in which language the meeting was held, it is very likely that the Indians communicated in Dutch with Van Rensselaer. In their testimony, the six Indians primarily gave practical intelligence about their homelands in the provinces of Paraíba, Rio Grande, and Ceará. Reflecting the WIC interest in useful navigation information, the Potiguar informants told Van Rensselaer in great detail about the northeastern coastline and the waterways leading into the interior. Perhaps in the hope that the WIC would establish a beachhead in Rio Grande and liberate the Potiguars from the Portuguese, the Indians told Van Rensselaer of the military strength of the coastal Portuguese fort in Rio Grande. Understanding the Dutch interest in precious minerals, the senior Indian leader Caspar Paraupaba extensively reported about the existence of several silver mines in the interior of Ceará. To emphasize that they were not deceiving the Dutch, Paraupaba and other Ceará Indians “offer to return to this place with the vessels of the Company in order to look for the silver and return here with it.”

98 For this testimony, see Bondam, “Journeaux et Nouvelles Tirées,” 171-177. For the quote on the Ceará silver mines, see 173-174. During the 1630s Kiliaen van Rensselaer would
The most detailed intelligence provided by the Potiguars was related to the native peoples of northeastern Brazil. Referring to their own people as Potiguars and “Tiguars”, the Indian informants supplied a large list of neighboring native communities and included a short description of some of these peoples’ cultural customs, weapons, and leaders. Especially useful for the WIC was that the Potiguars sometimes indicated which native groups were enemies of the Portuguese. According to historian Kees Zandvliet, much of this information provided by the Potiguars to Kiliaen van Rensselaer made its way to an important chart of coastal Brazil made by the mapmaker Hessel Gerritsz in the early 1630s. This chart not only included sailing directions for WIC vessels but also revealed the homelands of many Indian nations that were friendly to the Dutch. Finally, the native intermediaries also furnished Van Rensselaer with Indian terms and words that the Company might find useful in establishing contacts with the Brazilian Indians. Many of these words were military terms such as “Tata kowich” (gunpowder), “Tata ouja” (bullets or balls), and “Mocaba” (firearm), strongly suggesting that the Dutch wanted to supply weapons to possible Indian allies. On other occasions the Potiguar envoys must also have given more comprehensive linguistic information to the Dutch. For instance, in the previously mentioned French edition of the Nieuwe werelt of 1640, De Laet provided a list of Tupi words that he had collected from the Paraíba Indians that had been taken to the Republic. Since many of these words related to body parts such as nose, mouth, and arms, the word-list published by De Laet appears to have been of Potiguar origin.99

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99 For the information about Indian groups, see Bondam, “Journeaux et Nouvelles Tirées,” 171-177. The word-list is discussed on page 174. For Zandvliet, see his Mapping for Money, 190. For De Laet’s word-list, see his L'Histoire du Nouveau Monde, 536-537. It should be
3. Intercultural Diplomats and the Dutch-Tarairiu Alliance, 1629-1635

Because of their professed loyalty to the WIC, their ability to speak Dutch, and their willingness to provide a wealth of useful data to the Dutch, the Potiguar envoys were quickly utilized as intercultural diplomats during the WIC invasion of Pernambuco in early 1630. When the Heeren XIX issued initial instructions in August 1629 to Admiral Hendrick Lonck, the commander of the WIC invasion fleet, the Company officials suggested that Lonck make good use of the Indian mediators. Although the Potiguars did not participate in the actual attack on Pernambuco in early 1630, some of the thirteen Indian interpreters, among whom was Pieter Poty, arrived with the invaders at the Dutch beachhead in August 1630. However, since the WIC troops encountered stiff military resistance from the Portuguese colonists and their Indian allies in Pernambuco, the WIC commanders were afraid to dispatch their valuable Potiguar mediators to their kinsmen in Paraíba and Rio Grande. As a result, those Potiguars transported to Brazil were only employed as interpreters for Indians who were able to break through the Portuguese lines surrounding the Dutch positions. According to the letter written in Dutch by Pieter Poty to the Heeren XIX sometime in the spring of 1631, Poty served as interpreter for several Indian messengers who had traveled from Paraiba and Rio Grande to Pernambuco to ask for a military alliance with the Dutch. That Poty was able communicate directly with the supreme board of WIC directors in the Republic clearly revealed that the Company

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noted that De Laet was more interested in the collecting of information than in describing the history of Indian-Dutch relations in this encyclopedic work. For instance, in the same section of his book he also listed other word-lists.
authorities considered some of the Potiguar mediators as trustworthy and reliable interpreters.100

Ironically, the Heeren XIX had been so optimistic and hopeful about the usefulness of these Indian liaisons that they grew impatient when the alliance with the Indian peoples in the northeastern frontier provinces did not materialize quickly. Reflecting more general differences in expectations and perceptions between imperial officials in the metropolitan center and European authorities in the colonial periphery, the Heeren XIX criticized the Political Council and the WIC government in Pernambuco, for not making better use of the Indian mediators that had been sent over from the Republic. In a letter dated May 30, 1631, the Heeren XIX complained “we have sent to you recently two Brazilians as well as several others from the Bay of Treason [in Paraíba],” but “we found that they are not employed by you.” Irritated that the Potiguar liaisons had “been educated here [the Republic] in reading and writing at great costs,” the Heeren XIX instructed the WIC officials in Brazil to employ them “for other services [that] conform [to] their capacity.”101

Contrary to the beliefs of the Heeren XIX, the Political Council in Pernambuco had already been employing the Potiguar liaisons in an attempt to establish an alliance with the Tupi Indian peoples in the northeastern frontier provinces of Rio Grande and Ceará. Unfortunately for the WIC, they were unable to dispatch the Potiguar envoys to their kinsmen in the bay of Paraíba, because the Portuguese had harshly punished these

100 Reformed Church in Brazil, 169. For Poty’s letter, see DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 49: Letter from Pieter Pottij to the Heeren XIX, undated (Spring 1631).

101 For this letter, see DNA, OWIC, Secret Minutes of the Heeren XIX, 1629-1645, Inv. No. 2: Letter dated May 30, 1631.
Indians after Boudewijn Hendricksz had departed Paraíba in 1625. According to Elias Herckmans, a prominent WIC official in Paraíba during the late 1630s, Portuguese and Spanish officials had enslaved large numbers of Paraíba Potiguars following the visit of Hendricksz in 1625, and the *aldeia* or Indian mission village in the bay of Paraíba had been abandoned in 1628. In addition, a considerable number of Tupis from the provinces of Pernambuco and Itamaracá remained loyal to the Portuguese. It was only after Company troops succeeded in breaking through the Portuguese cordon around Recife and Olinda in 1634-1635 that the Dutch were able to establish an effective alliance with the Potiguars and other Tupi-speaking peoples of northeastern Brazil.102

Incapable of using the Paraíba Potiguars, the Political Council instead focused on other possible Indian allies of the northeastern frontier. Based upon information gathered from Indians and from intercepted Portuguese letters describing the “Tapuyas” as particularly dangerous enemies, the Political Council in late July 1631 dispatched “a Brazilian [a Tupi-speaking Indian] to the nation of the Tapuyas who reside in the vicinity of Rio Grande, in order to attract them to our friendship and aid.” Although they were referred to as “Tapuyas” in Portuguese and Dutch correspondence, the “Tapuyas” in this case were really the Tarairius, an Indian group inhabiting the interior of the Rio Grande province. The name “Tapuya” was originally a Tupi word defining any Indian who was ethnically and linguistically different from the Tupi-speaking peoples. Europeans quickly

102 For the Portuguese punishment of the Paraiba Potiguars, see Elias Herckmans, “Generale Beschrijvinge van de Capitanie Paraíba [July 31, 1639],” *Bijdragen en Mededelingen van het Historisch Genootschap (Gevestigd te Utrecht)* 2 (1879), 346-347. The Portuguese colonial officials even punished some Paraiba Indian leaders who had remained loyal to the Portuguese. See Duarte de Albuquerque Coelho, *Memórias Diárias da Guerra do Brasil, 1630-1638* José Antônio Gonsalves de Mello, ed., (Recife: Fundação de Cultura Cidade do Recife, 1982), 176-177.
adopted the usage to distinguish the “Tapuyas” from the Tupi-speaking natives who lived in the coastal areas such as the Potiguar.

It is unknown who this “Brazilian” was, but it could very well have been one of the Potiguar mediators. In any case, on October 2, one Marciliaen, a native messenger from the Rio Grande Tapuyas, reached the town of Olinda, the temporary seat of the Political Council in Pernambuco. Marciliaen was soon interrogated, probably by two of the Potiguar mediators. He had been sent by “King Jandovi [Nhanduí] and Ogenou” of the Tarairius “to see if the Tapotingas (that is those of the WIC) were still in Pernambuco so that they could become one people with them.” Hopeful of establishing a military alliance with the Tarairius and other Indian peoples, the Political Council subsequently sent an expedition led by Ellert Smient to make contact with the native peoples in Rio Grande and Ceará.

In mid-October 1631 Smient set sail with the yacht *nieu nederlant* and a large sloop from Pernambuco to Rio Grande. Aboard these vessels were Marciliaen and several Tupi-speaking Indian envoys from Ceara who had recently traveled to Pernambuco to inquire about an alliance with the Dutch. To communicate with the Tarairius and the Ceará Tupis, the Political Council included several interpreters and messengers: the Portuguese Jew Samuel Cohen, and some of the “Brazilians from the Bay of Treason [in Paraíba] who had been brought to Holland and stayed there for a long time.” They were

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104 Joannes de Laet, *Iaerlyck Verhael*, Naber, ed. (LV 37), discusses the Brazilian Indian sent to Rio Grande (12) and the returning Tapuya Indian messenger (25).
to persuade the Indian peoples “in Rio Grande, in Ceará, and elsewhere to come to our
friendship and fight against the Portuguese.” When Smient’s expedition reached the Rio
Grande coast, Marciliaen and the Ceará Indian envoys were quickly sent ashore. On
November 10 one of the envoys, Andries Tacou, returned to the coast with a group of
Ceará Indians whom he and the other envoys had freed from a Portuguese slave trader in
the interior. After Tacou was interviewed, with the help of the Potiguar mediators, Smient
became convinced of the willingness of the Indians to join in an alliance with the WIC.
The Dutch commander then returned to Pernambuco with the sloop to prepare
reinforcements for an attack on the Portuguese positions in Rio Grande and Ceará. In the
meantime, Smient instructed the crew of *nieu nederlant*, on which were also the
unidentified Potiguar mediators, to go to Ceará and establish contact with the Ceará
Indians.¹⁰⁵

However, as mentioned in the discussion of Samuel Cohen, the plan went awry.
Instead of waiting for the return of Smient, the *nieu nederlant* dropped off the Indians and
set sail to the Caribbean to fetch salt. What is more, the unnamed Potiguar interpreters
were also put ashore. As a result, when Smient arrived off the coast of Ceará with forty
soldiers on the ship ‘t wapen van Hoorn (“The coat of arms of Hoorn”) off the coast of
Ceará in December 1631, he could neither locate the *nieu nederlant* nor the Indians that
had been disembarked. Without any intelligence and without any hint at the whereabouts
of the Ceará Indians, Smient was forced to abandon his plan for an attack on the
Portuguese. Not only was the operation botched, but the Potiguar mediators that had been
educated in the United Provinces were lost. Writing to the *Heeren XIX* in late December

¹⁰⁵ This paragraph is mostly based on Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 523. For the
1631, the Political Council expressed fury that the unnamed captain of the *nieu nederlant* had simply disembarked the Tarairiu and Ceará Indian envoys without bothering to wait for Smient, and it was especially irritated that the crew of the yacht had dropped off “all the Brazilians who have cost Your Honors [the *Heeren XIX*] so much and who could have served here.”

Despite the disappearance of several valuable Potiguar diplomatic agents in the expedition of 1631, the Political Council continued to utilize the remaining native interpreters to further diplomatic ties with the Rio Grande Tapuyas. In February 1633, Maraca Potura, a Tarairiu messenger from Rio Grande, reached Olinda in an attempt to persuade the Political Council to establish an alliance with the Tapuyas against the Portuguese. Although the WIC councilors were skeptical of sending another expedition to Rio Grande, the Political Council dispatched several unnamed Potiguar liaisons to accompany the Tarairiu envoy to “King” Nhanduí to inform him that the WIC was still interested in an alliance. However, in May 1633 two of the Potiguar negotiators returned to Pernambuco in a Company yacht and informed the Political Council that they had waited in vain for the return of Potura after dropping him off at the coast of Rio Grande. Upon disembarking Potura had left the Indian interpreters a cord with eighteen knots indicating that the latter had to wait eighteen days for the arrival of the Tarairius at the coast. When they had not seen or heard anything from Potura after the prescribed period, the Potiguar mediators eventually decided to return to Pernambuco.\(^{107}\)

\(^{106}\) Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 523. For the quotation, see DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 49: Letter dated December 29, 1631.

\(^{107}\) For Maraca Potura and this expedition, see De Laet, *Iaerlyck Verhael*, Naber, ed. (LV 37): 143, 156.
Because the Political Council had still high expectations about a possible alliance with the Rio Grande Tarairius and the Ceará Indians, the WIC officials soon resolved to send a new expedition to the northern frontier in December 1633. To avoid another bungled operation, the Political Council this time dispatched a large force of eleven vessels, artillery pieces, and more than 800 WIC soldiers. With this army the Political Council expected not only to wrest control of the strategic coastal fort Reis Magos, but also hoped to establish direct contact with the elusive Tapuyas. To make possible communication between the WIC and the Tarairius the Political Council once again included some of the Potiguars who had been trained in the United Provinces. Among those Indian liaisons that were sent along with the WIC campaign were Caspar Paraupaba and his son Antonio. While it is possible that Caspar and Antonio were simply very skilled interpreters, it is also likely that the Political Council had purposefully selected the Potiguar father and son as mediators for this expedition because they were perceived by the Dutch as prestigious hereditary leaders who could perhaps persuade the Tarairiu “King” Nhandui and other Indian leaders to join the Dutch in an alliance against the Portuguese.108

The WIC forces had gained control of Fort Reis Magos after a short siege on December 11 and renamed it Fort Ceulen. The Political Council instructed George Garstman, the newly appointed commander, to receive any Indians “who came to make an alliance with us,” to “provide them in our name with all aid and assistance and [to tell

them] that we are fully inclined to enter into an alliance with them and wage war together against the Portuguese, to drive them [the Portuguese] away and to live with the Brazilians in peace as our brothers.” In order to enable diplomatic relations between Garstman and the Indian peoples, Garstman was able to use the expertise of Caspar and Anthonio Paraupaba. Signifying their valuable skills, Garstman invited “the Brazilians Caspar and his son Anthonij to come in the fort,” rather than stay outside as was customary for Indians, because “they who had learned Dutch in the fatherland could serve as interpreters.”

In addition to Caspar and Anthonio Paraupaba, Garstman made also extensive use of one Jansenpretinger or Jansen Pretinger, an enigmatic Indian messenger and interpreter of whom it is not clear that he was trained in the Republic. While Jansenpretinger is referred to in some WIC correspondence as a “Brazilian” or Tupi-speaking Indian, Joannes De Laet considered him a “Tapuya.” Although it is not fully clear which languages Jansenpretinger had mastered, Garstman greatly relied on him during the first initial diplomatic encounters with the Tapuyas in early 1634. On February 8 Garstman reported in his official log “Jan Seprijtinger has taken several presents from us to distribute among the Brazilians [the Ceará Indians and the Tarairius], to understand their motives and in this way attempt to align them with us.” To the surprise of Garstman,

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109 See DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 50: “Journal of the Expedition to Rio Grande, December 5-21, 1633,” especially the entries for December 15 (Caspar and Anthonio Paraupaba allowed to stay in the fort), and Article 21 of the instructions for Garstman (quotations about how to deal with Indians).
Jansenpretinger returned on March 7 to Fort Ceulen, bringing with him no less than 1,500 Tarairius, including 300 warriors and the so-called “King” Nhanduí.\textsuperscript{110}

Reflecting the great interest of the Company had in forging an alliance with Nhanduí, Garstman received the large Tarairiu delegation with all possible diplomatic honors. After having provided all Tarairiu men, women, and children “with available food and drink”, Garstman distributed a variety of gifts such as “beads, drums, cups, little knives, as well as bells and rings” to the Tarairius as a sign of friendship. In addition, to signify the Dutch belief that Nhanduí was the “King” of the Tapuyas and should be treated like a prominent ruler, Garstman provided Nhanduí with more prestigious items. According to the commander, “I have given him because of his position, one of my own shirts, and also a sword, all brought from Holland, as well as a hat with feathers.” The last gifts were especially indicative of the high regard the WIC had for Nhanduí because a sword and a feathered hat were traditional symbols of authority in the Republic. In addition, to honor the Tarairius and perhaps also to impress them with the military power of the Dutch, Garstman had some of the cannon at the fort fired when the Tapuyas arrived. Finally, by inviting Nhanduí to spend the night inside Fort Ceulen “together with our Brazilians” while the other Tarairius stayed outside, Garstman again emphasized that

\textsuperscript{110} For Jansenpretinger, see DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 50: “Letter from Commander Garstman at Fort Ceulen, February 15, 1634,” and “Letter from Commander Garstman at Fort Ceulen, March 1634.” It is likely that the Dutch spelling “Jansenpretinger” reflects a Dutch (mis)-pronunciation of an unknown Tupi or Tapuya name. De Laet, \textit{Iaerlyck Verhael}, Naber, ed. (LV 40): 7, argues that Jansenpretinger returned with 1,500 men including 300 warriors. De Laet also implies that Jansenpretinger was a Tarairiu rather than a Tupi.
the WIC viewed the Tarairius as potentially important allies whose leader should be treated with respect.\textsuperscript{111}

Unfortunately, it is not known who functioned as liaisons and interpreters between Garstman and Nhanduí during the negotiations that took place the following day. However, because he had persuaded Nhanduí to come to Garstman, it is likely that Jansenpretinger was present at these talks. In addition, since they spoke Dutch, Caspar Paraupaba and his son Anthonio were probably also used as translators. Finally, Nhanduí would probably have employed some of his own people who spoke the Tupi language.

To signify the important political and military nature of their meeting, Garstman and Nhanduí first honored each other with diplomatic rituals. While Garstman instructed his men to fire two cannon and play the trumpet, Tarairiu warriors displayed their martial prowess by showcasing their archery skills and by singing and dancing. Following these ceremonies Garstman and Nhanduí eventually held a council with each other in which they discussed plans for an alliance against the Portuguese, some of who were still holding out in Rio Grande after the WIC conquest of the coastal fort in December 1633.\textsuperscript{112}

According to Garstman, Nhanduí quickly accepted a plan to join forces for an attack on Cunhau, a small but fortified Portuguese hamlet on the Rio Grande coast. On March 9, 1634 a force of 29 WIC soldiers and 160 Tarairiu warriors led by respectively

\textsuperscript{111} For the diplomatic meeting between Nhanduí and Garstman, see OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 50: “Letter from Garstman, March 1634.” See also Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 523. For the significance of a sword and a feathered hat as symbols of authority, see Zegenrijk Gewest, 300. For a similar use of ceremonies and salutes by the Dutch East India Company toward native peoples in Taiwan during the same period, see Tonio Andrade, “Political Spectacle and Colonial Rule: The Landdag on Dutch Taiwan, 1629-1648,” Itinerario 21, No. 3 (1997): 57-93.

\textsuperscript{112} For the diplomatic meeting, see Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 523.
Sergeant Jan Blaer and one of the sons of Nhandui set out for a campaign against the Portuguese. Garstman reported that the joint WIC-Tarairiu unit returned to the fort on March 13, informing him that they had scattered a large group of Portuguese colonists and soldiers somewhere in the interior after a short battle. As historian Ernst van den Boogaart has pointed out, “The initial reactions of the Dutch after this campaign were mixed.” Although an ensign told Garstman that “the Taponiers have proven themselves very loyal to our people,” he also observed that the Tarairius hold “every evening great ceremonies with the evil enemy and do as they like.” This ambiguous statement was most likely a reference to the traditional religious dances and rituals the Tarairius held and which the WIC soldiers interpreted as the work of the devil.113

Similarly, when the Political Councilors in Pernambuco received reports from Garstman about the usefulness of the Tarairius in the spring of 1634, they also reacted with mixed feelings. In a letter to the Heeren XIX dated April 18, 1634, Councilor Servaes Carpentier concluded that the Tarairius are “daring and brave, in all a warlike people” who “the Portuguese fear excessively.” At the same time, Carpentier realized that the behavior of the Tarairius exposed several liabilities that made it problematic to use them as military allies. While Carpentier also took note of the nakedness of the Tarairius and their nocturnal ceremonies in the woods, he was more concerned about the willingness of the Tarairius to kill women and children. After the Tarairius requested to continue their customary practice of killing non-combatants, surprised WIC officials told them “that, [because] women do not wear and carry arms and children are innocent, one

113 For the campaign of the Tarairius with a unit of WIC troops and the quotation from his ensign, see DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 50: “Letter from Garstman at Fort Ceulen, March 1634.” For Van den Boogaart, see “Infernal Allies,” 527.
should spare them [women and children].” In addition, Carpentier was irritated that the Tarairius did not have any food supplies with them. The Dutch garrison of Fort Ceulen reportedly had to provide the Tarairius with food, which had strained the WIC supplies.\textsuperscript{114}

Another problem that limited the value of the Tarairius were the ongoing intertribal wars between the Tarairius and the Tupi-speaking peoples of the northeastern frontier provinces. As we have seen in the previous chapter, these wars had remote origins and had accelerated after the arrival of the Portuguese and the slave trade. However, for the WIC, these conflicts interfered with the formation of a broad anti-Portuguese alliance. Garstman complained to Nhanduí after being notified of several recent slayings of “Brazilians” at the hands of the Tarairius in Rio Grande. He denounced the “non-Christian practice” of killing Indian allies of the WIC and he told the Indian leader that “I would not tolerate such things and they should restrain themselves in the future.” While Nhanduí replied that “this would not happen anymore,” it is clear that all these problems led WIC officials to doubt the effectiveness of an alliance with the Tarairius.\textsuperscript{115}

Finally, communication between the WIC and the Tarairius remained difficult. Despite their ability to speak Dutch and Tupi, Caspar and Anthonio Paraupaba were unable to fully master the linguistically different Tarairiu language. Because WIC officials preferred to work with the Paraupaba family for their proficiency in Dutch, they were clearly disappointed that Anthonio Paraupaba had not been fully able to understand

\textsuperscript{114} DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 50: “Letter from Servaes Carpentier to the Heeren XIX, April 18, 1634.”

\textsuperscript{115} For Garstman’s complaints, see DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 50: “Letter from Garstman at Fort Ceulen, March 1634.”
the Tarairius who accompanied the soldiers led by Sergeant Blaer. The Dutch author Arnoldus Montanus noted this problem when he described the Dutch relations with the Tarairius in his 1671 history of the Dutch in the Americas. Montanus argued that the lack of effective communication between the two groups was primarily caused by “the lack of interpreters, because those that are used by the Dutch only understand two languages, the one being the general Brazilian [language] used along the ocean, the other being the Portuguese [language], through which they translate to the Hollanders as much as possible.” Unfortunately, the language of the Tarairius “differs much from the general Brazilian [language]; because they [the Tarairius] live deep in the interior, are divided in several peoples who can not comprehend one another and are continuously at war with each other.” According to Montanus, “for the most part” the interpreters employed by the Dutch could not understand what the Tarairius were telling them and often could only communicate by “nodding and gesturing.”

In an attempt to bridge the large linguistic and cultural divide between the Dutch and the Tarairius, Garstman and Nhanduí agreed to exchange individuals as a sign of friendship and alliance. While Nhanduí left one of his sons and one of his relatives at the WIC fort to emphasize the Tarairiu’s good intentions, Garstman instructed six soldiers to accompany Nhanduí to his homelands in the interior of Rio Grande. Although these individuals primarily served as temporary “hostages” to increase mutual trust, both sides

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116 For the inability of Paraupaba to communicate with the Tarairius and for the exchange of “hostages”, see Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 527. On Arnoldus Montanus, see his De Nieuwe en Onbekende Weereld: of Beschryving van America en ’t Zuid-Land (Amsterdam: Jacob Meurs, 1671), 373-374. Although Montanus wrote one generation after the actual events happened, he made use of primary documents, some of which now have been lost. Montanus is also a credible source since much of what he writes is corroborated by still existing WIC documents.
probably also facilitated the training of bilingual interpreters by sending selected persons to live with the other. In this respect it is significant to note that while four soldiers soon returned to Fort Ceulen, the two others remained among the Tarairius. As we have seen, the Dutch had probably instigated a similar deal with the Mahicans on the upper Hudson Valley in 1613 when they left behind Jacob Eelckens among the Indians for two Mahican brothers who were taken to the Republic.¹¹⁷

But before any of the Tarairiu men or WIC soldiers could be expected to have learned each other’s languages, the sole skillful translator between Garstman and Nhanduí, the valuable Jansenpretinger, disappeared. Unexpectedly as he had appeared in WIC correspondence, so mysteriously did he vanish from the historical records in late March 1634. The last time Jansenpretinger is mentioned is in an entry for March 22 in the log kept by Garstman. On that day, the commander noted that he had recently sent out Jansenpretinger to carry letters containing information about the Dutch relations with the Tarairius to WIC officials on the strategic island of Itamaracá nearby Pernambuco. Fearing that the Portuguese and their Indian allies would capture him, Jansenpretinger hid the messages from Garstman in a secret hollow part of his war-club. After this reference nothing is further known about Jansenpretinger. Although it is possible that he simply returned safely to Garstman and continued to function as interpreter, his absence in any later WIC correspondence is remarkable considering the fact that Jansenpretinger was the only individual who was fluent in the Tarairiu language.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ The exchange of hostages is discussed by Van den Boogaart in his “Infernal Allies,” 527. On the return of the four WIC soldiers to Fort Ceulen, see Montanus, Nieuwe Weereld, 446-447.

¹¹⁸ For the last reference to Jansenpretinger, see DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 50: “Letter from Garstman at Fort Ceulen, March 1634.”
When the Political Council sent one of its members to Rio Grande to hold a special council with Nhanduí in the fall of 1634, the WIC dispatched Anthonio Paraupaba rather than Jansenpretinger to persuade Nhanduí to come to the fort. We therefore have to conclude that Jansenpretinger either died or was captured during his mission to bring letters to the authorities. Without Jansenpretinger, WIC officials were now dependent upon the limited linguistic expertise of Paraupaba to facilitate communication with the Tarairius. On October 2, the WIC delegation consisting of Jacob Stachouwer, a Political Councilor, and Colonel Christopher Arcizewski, one of the highest WIC military officers in Brazil, instructed “the interpreter Antonio Parapoava” to tell “King Jandovi” that “two of the most principal men” of the Company were waiting for him to establish an alliance with the Tarairius against the Portuguese.119

In the meantime, while Paraupaba traveled to the interior, Arcizewski attempted to satisfy his curiosity about the Tarairius by inquiring about their customs and culture. Indirectly indicating the loss of Jansenpretinger, Arcizewski observed that the WIC was now unfortunately “poorly equipped with interpreters as our Brazilians can only partially understand the others [the Tarairius].” To collect ethnographic information about the Tarairius, Arcizewski subsequently relied on “Caracara, the King’s brother”, who was one of the two Tarairius who had stayed behind at the fort as a symbol of friendship and as an interpreter. Although it is unknown in what language Caracara communicated with Arcizewski, it is possible that Caracara had learned some Tupi or Portuguese. In any case, Caracara provided Arcizewski with considerable information about the Tarairius,

119 For the expedition of the Political Councilor to Rio Grande and the instructions to Paraupaba, see De Laet, Iaerlyck Verhael, Naber, ed. (LV 40): 47-48.
including detailed intelligence about the Indian allies and enemies of the Tarairius in the interior of Rio Grande. The ability of Arcizewski to document this information clearly indicated that communication between the WIC and the Tarairius was improving.\footnote{De Laet, \textit{Iaerlyck Verhael}, Naber, ed. (LV 40): 48-50.}

Anthonio Paraupaba eventually returned to Fort Ceulen with a Tarairiu delegation led by Commendaoura, the son of Nhanduí’s sister. According to Joannes de Laet, Commendaoura was the hereditary successor of the present Tarairiu “King” because the Tarairius “were not accustomed to have the Son succeed the Father.” Stachouwer and Arcizewski soon learned that Commendaoura had been sent out by Nhanduí to hold talks in his name, because the latter was prevented from traveling to Fort Ceulen due to the death of his wife and several of his friends as well as a severe drought that forced him and his people to look for water resources in the interior. After having spoken to Commendaoura, presumably with the aid of Paraupaba, Stachouwer and Arcizewski wrote a letter, and they instructed Paraupaba to carry it back to Nhanduí.\footnote{De Laet, \textit{Iaerlyck Verhael}, Naber, ed. (LV 40): 50-51.}

In this letter, “the Lords of Holland give kind greetings to King Jandovi, of Tararyon,” and suggested that Nhanduí and his warriors should soon join the WIC in a campaign to drive the Portuguese from the province of Paraíba. Implying that the Tarairius would be able to plunder the possessions of the Portuguese, Stachouwer and Arcizewski also urged Nhanduí to contact “other Kings, so that they will bring as many people with them as they can, for there will be enough loot for everybody.” Finally, as a sign of the ongoing Dutch commitment to friendship with the Tarairius, Stachouwer and his colleague distributed a large number of presents to Commendaoura and his delegation.
before they were taken to Pernambuco “so that they will be able to see our people and our
fortresses.” The list of Tarairiu gifts was extensive and included “two dozen shirts, three
small gilded halberds, three silvered swords, a dozen axes, two hundred knives, a
collection of beads and similar trinkets. Each Tapuya that had been present was also
given a shirt, several knives, and portions of wine for the duration of two days of
travel.”

As the ongoing meetings and the large number of distributed gifts revealed, the
Company remained deeply interested in the alliance with the Tarairius. Precisely because
of their ferocity against their enemies, the Tarairius were highly valued as military shock
troops by officials such as Stachouwer and Garstman. At the same time, the Council
realized that their manner of waging war made it impossible to use them as regular
auxiliary forces against the Portuguese. This became clear once more during the WIC
invasion of the province of Paraíba in November 1634. Although a large group of several
hundred enthusiastic Tarairius accompanied Company troops during the campaign
against Portuguese fortified positions, WIC commanders prevented the Tarairiu warriors
from killing and looting Portuguese families. While the Council valued the use of Indian
allies, it did not want to alienate Portuguese colonists who had great expertise in the sugar
trade and who were willing to live under Dutch rule. In a letter to the Heeren XIX the
Council warned that the Tarairius “are not a people that can be brought to civility, or
reside in a country among other Nations, nor to settle down and live off their labor.”

Disappointed that the WIC did not allow them to perform their traditional rituals of war
that included executing captives and the looting of conquered enemies, the Tarairiu

contingent returned to the interior of Rio Grande and ended their participation in the WIC campaign in Paraíba. In addition, Nhanduí ominously warned WIC officials that “he would not come to our aid anymore” if the Dutch continued to give quarter to Portuguese colonists who surrendered.\textsuperscript{123}

Because of these conflicting views of warfare, the alliance between the WIC and the Tarairius had become very fragile by 1635. Although the northeastern frontier province of Rio Grande as well as the important sugar province of Paraíba had now come under control of the WIC, the Political Council was reluctant to employ the Tarairius because of their perceived savagery. Furthermore, the WIC officials were afraid to provoke those Portuguese colonists and sugar planters in territories that had been brought under Company control. Significantly, as the WIC expanded its control over more parts of northeastern Brazil during the mid-1630s, the Political Council increasingly turned to the “Brazilians” or Tupi-speaking native peoples as military allies rather than the Tarairius. Because of their familiarity with Europeans as well as their partial adoption of European clothing and Christianity, the Tupi-speaking Indians such as the Potiguaras seemed more reliable to Company officials. In addition, the WIC communicated more easily with the Tupis by using the group of Potiguar liaisons that had been educated in the

\textsuperscript{123} De Laet, \textit{Iaerlyck Verhael}, Naber, ed. (LV 40): 60 (Tarairius at expedition in Paraíba), 70 (Nhandui complaint). For the complaint of the Political Council, see DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 50: “General Missive from the Political Council to the \textit{Heeren XIX}, June 15, 1634.” See also Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 527. Although there is no scholarly discussion of Tarairiu warfare to my knowledge, their customs of war were very similar to those of other Brazilian Indian peoples. For a discussion of warfare among the coastal Indians of Brazil, see John M. Monteiro, “The Crises and Transformations of Invaded Societies: Coastal Brazil in the Sixteenth Century,” in: Frank Salomon and Stuart A. Schwartz, eds. \textit{The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas South America}, Volume 3, part 1, \textit{South America} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 986-989.
Republic. In time, the Company would make great use of the Tupi Indian population as they occupied the northeast.

Although the Council was growing increasingly skeptical about the usability of the Tarairius, Dutch officials at the same time continued to need the Tarairius in the ongoing war against the Portuguese. The Council saw in the Tarairius opportunities to intimidate Portuguese colonists or rebels. Likewise, Nhanduí and his people regarded the WIC as a useful if difficult ally, who not only provided them with valuable material goods but who also strengthened their position against the Portuguese and neighboring Indians.

To preserve this pragmatic alliance and to overcome their mutual suspicions, experienced liaisons were called for. However, as we have seen, due to the lack of capable interpreters, mutual distrust increased rather than decreased during the early 1630s. Although Paraupaba was a valuable mediator between the WIC and the various Indian peoples of northeastern Brazil, he was no replacement for Jansenpretinger when it came to the Tarairius. As the war against the Portuguese in Brazil expanded in 1635, and as the Dutch continued to rely on Indian allies, the Council and Nhanduí lacked skillful diplomats who could speak the Tarairiu language as well as prevent Tarairiu atrocities against Portuguese colonists.

4. Indian Jargons for New Netherland

While the Dutch in northeastern Brazil relied heavily on the Potiguar mediators that had been trained in the United Provinces to facilitate intercultural diplomacy, Dutch merchants and navigators operating in mid-Atlantic North America were dependent upon
Dutch and European individuals to make possible negotiations with the various native peoples. Because the experiment with the two Indian brothers whom Van Wassenaer had named Valentijn and Orsou had proved a tragic failure, the Dutch abandoned plans to educate Indians as Dutch-speaking interpreters. Similarly, the Dutch had not allowed the Susquehannocks to kidnap several Dutchmen in order to prepare them for a career as diplomatic agents. To have done so would have given the Susquehannocks linguistic control over the intercultural encounter and would have made the Dutch dependent upon the indigenous peoples.

Faced with numerous autonomous Indian communities and populations across a vast region, Dutch traders and navigators therefore concluded that they had to become familiar with the various Indian languages and native diplomatic customs if they wanted to acquire beaver pelts and obtain information about possible riches and waterways in the interior. The Dutch were not ideologically opposed to learning native languages and local diplomatic customs to facilitate trade and other relations. Because of the significance of overseas commerce for their economy, Dutch merchants and navigators often adopted the languages and culture of the region in which they traded. At the same time, the use of strange tongues and native diplomatic customs did not imply that the Dutch fully embraced these foreign cultures. As long as commercial exchange flourished and merchants got what they wanted, adopting native languages and strange diplomatic rituals was not only useful, but also vital, for a burgeoning trade.124

However, before learning Indian tongues and native protocols, the Dutch first had to obtain information about the actual peoples who inhabited the region that the Dutch

124 For this process of Europeans accommodating to Indians, see Merrell, ‘The Customes of Our Country’.
named *Nieuw Nederlandt* or “New Netherland”. Like other early modern Europeans, the Dutch greatly relied on maps and charts to collect intelligence about foreign lands and their inhabitants. Although the Dutch navigators and traders operating in mid-Atlantic North America were particularly interested in the coastal waterways traversing New Netherland, they were also very curious to know more about the native peoples in the area. According to historian Cynthia Van Zandt, early modern European explorers “sought information about the polities of the people living in the area, about their likely status as ally or enemy, and about their civil and military authorities. Sixteenth and early seventeenth-century European mapmakers were as concerned with mapping the body politic as with mapping lands and waterways.”

Two maps made during the earliest voyages of the Dutch in the area illustrate well the Dutch interest in the “body politic” of the native societies in mid-Atlantic North America. While professional mapmakers in the United Provinces produced both maps, Dutch navigators and traders who had personally visited New Netherland provided the data depicted on them. In addition, these Dutch observers mostly relied on Indian informants for the data about native peoples. Reflecting the Dutch need to obtain practical information about the Indian peoples with whom they were exchanging commodities, the maps depict the names and locations of several native polities in the region of New Netherland. The earliest known Dutch map of mid-Atlantic North America is the *figurative caerte* or “figurative map” of New Netherland by mapmaker Cornelis Doetsz (1614); Captain Adriaen Block supplied Doetz with the data to the

States-General in The Hague. A consortium of Amsterdam and Hoorn merchants presented the map as part of a petition to obtain official trade privileges from the delegates of the seven United Provinces. To obtain the States-General charter, the merchants had previously dispatched Block to map the region of New Netherland as accurately as possible.\(^{126}\)

In addition to describing the numerous waterways and the complicated coastline, Block also provided Doetsz with details about the native inhabitants. Indicating that the Dutch considered the Indian peoples as independent political entities, Doetsz displayed the names of the Mahicans, Maquaas (Mohawks), Maximanus, Minquaas (Susquehannocks), and other native peoples in a large letter type to differentiate them from geographic terms that were displayed in a smaller font. Similarly, Doetsz used scattered houses to mark the villages of the natives. At the same time, the figurative map also demonstrated the limited Dutch knowledge about the indigenous peoples of New Netherland. Because the Dutch were unable to communicate effectively with the natives in this period, Block was only able to pass on to Doetsz rudimentary and fragmentary information that the natives had told him. For instance, although the Dutch were concerned about French trade relations with Indians in the interior of North America, Block could tell Doetsz nothing more than that “from what can be understood from the

\(^{126}\) For the figurative map of 1614, see Kees Zandvliet, “Een ouderwetse kaart van Nieuw Nederland door Cornelis Doetsz. en Willem Jansz. Blaeu,” *Caert-Thresoor* 1 (1982): 57-60. A full-scale facsimile of this map is provided between pages 12-13 in *DRCHSNY* 1. See also Phelps-Stokes, ed. *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, II, chapter 2.
conversations and sign language with the Maquaas the French come with sloops into the interior.”  

The story of another map reveals the difficulties of intercultural communication. The same group of Amsterdam merchants submitted the new map with a new petition to the States-General in 1616. The new map was a compilation of geographic and ethnographic information provided by Captain Cornelis Hendricksz, who had been making voyages to mid-Atlantic North America since at least 1613. Like the figurative map of two years earlier, the 1616 map displayed the native peoples as independent polities by using bold letters and houses. While the figurative map concentrated on the coastline from New York to New England, the 1616 map provided detailed information about the geography and native peoples of the Delaware Valley.

Additional data about this area had been collected by the previously discussed expedition of Kleyntjen (1615). As we have seen, Kleyntjen’s intelligence gathering mission ended prematurely, after the Susquehannocks captured it somewhere along the Delaware Valley. When Hendricksz eventually ransomed Kleyntjen and his two comrades, Kleyntjen gave as much information to Hendricksz as he could about the natives he had encountered. However, the ethnographic data provided by Kleyntjen on the 1616 map were limited because of Kleyntjen’s inability to communicate much with the Indians. As a result, the unknown mapmaker only incorporated sketchy and ambiguous information about Indians in the interior. The mapmaker even admitted that Kleyntjen “at this point” had only provided him with “two partly finished drafts of maps”

127 For the quotation, see the legend on the figurative map in original Dutch in *DRCHSNY* 1: between pages 12-13. For the practice of European mapmakers to use large letters to suggest that the native peoples were autonomous political entities, see Van Zandt, “Negotiating Settlement,” 61.
that were ambiguous as to the geographic location of the “Sennecas, Gachoos, Capitanasses, and Jennecas.”128

The two maps of New Netherland revealed that the Dutch had considerable problems learning the local Indian languages and customs. The ethnographic information collected by the Dutch was limited to the names and approximate locations of the various Indian polities and did not include many other data. Still, this limited intelligence was useful for the Dutch traders who navigated up and down the waterways visiting Indian communities. Although the pre-WIC period in New Netherland is badly documented, the ongoing Dutch voyages to mid-Atlantic North America during the 1610s clearly indicate that the Dutch had learned intercultural linguistic skills sufficient to facilitate a profitable exchange of beaver pelts for a variety of European goods.

Since the use of sign language easily led to misunderstandings, Dutch traders quickly picked up some useful terms and phrases from the natives. Like their counterparts in other regions across the world, Dutch traders operating in New Netherland attempted to familiarize themselves with necessary native idioms. However, while Dutch navigators and traders in West Africa and Southeast Asia could relatively easily adopt widely practiced regional trade languages, the Dutch in New Netherland did not encounter any simplified existing jargon. Although intra-regional networks of trade existed in mid-Atlantic North America before the arrival of Europeans, they operated on a much smaller scale than the extensive and complex trade networks along the West African coast and Southeast Asia. In the absence of a complicated system of inter-regional exchange, there

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128 This and the previous paragraph are based on the good facsimile copy of the map in DRCHSNY, Volume 1: between pages 10-11. The quotations can be found on this map. For the expedition of Hendricksz and Kleyntjen, see “Captain Hendricksen’s Report,”; and Brodhead, History of New York, 78-79. See also Zandvliet, Mapping for Money, 187-188.
was therefore no need in mid-Atlantic North America for a trade language spoken and understood by all native peoples. Instead of a simplified common regional tongue, a small group of individuals who spoke multiple languages primarily facilitated long-distance trade in Northeastern North America.129

Acquiring the language of the region was no easy task. The various Algonquian and Iroquoian languages, first of all, contained a “bewildering morphological complexity and polysynthesis,” from the European point of view, which made it practically impossible for a Dutchman to fully acquire fluency in any one of the local Indian languages. Secondly, almost every native community they encountered spoke a different tongue. In the installment of his “Historical Journal” of February 1624, Nicolaes van Wassenaer noted about this linguistic diversity in New Netherland “‘Tis worthy of remark that, with so many tribes, there is so great a diversity of language. They vary frequently not over five or six leagues; forthwith comes another language; if they meet they can hardly understand one another. There are some who come sixty leagues from the interior, and can not at all understand those on the river.”130


Despite the great differences between the Indian and European languages as well as the considerable regional linguistic diversity, Dutch traders and navigators quickly gained at least a basic proficiency in some of the native tongues to allow for an ongoing intercultural exchange. For instance, from 1624 to 1635 the annual export of animal skins from New Netherland rose progressively. Since the Dutch, like the French and English elsewhere in North America, remained fully dependent upon Indian suppliers in the fur trade, the Dutch could only have obtained these furs through some system of intercultural communication. Significantly, in the first period of WIC activities in New Netherland during the 1620s and early 1630s several Dutch-Indian wordlists were published which attested to the ability of the Dutch to master some of the complicated Indian languages. In the previously mentioned “Historical Journal” of February 1624, Van Wassenaer included the numbers one to ten in an Algonquian language and provided the Algonquian terms for months. Although Van Wassenaer did not mention who gave him this information, it is almost certain that he obtained it from Dutch sailors and traders who had made voyages to New Netherland.\textsuperscript{131}

Similarly, De Laet discussed indigenous American languages in his \textit{Nieuwe Werelt} (“New World”). Like other learned Europeans of his time, De Laet was particularly interested in collecting ethnographic data. At the same time, De Laet’s position as a director of the Amsterdam WIC Chamber encouraged him to obtain all kinds of practical information. De Laet consequently published a vocabulary of the “Sankikans, who dwell on the upper part of the South River [Delaware River],” in the

\textsuperscript{131} For the largely progressive rise of the export of animal skins from New Netherland, see \textit{Zegenrijk Gewest}, 181, table 4.1. In several years the export was lower than the year before, suggesting crises in Dutch-Indian relations, intertribal wars, or temporary overhunting by the Indians. For Van Wassenaer, see \textit{NNN}, 73.
1640 French edition of his “New World.” Like Van Wassenaer, De Laet did not state the source of this wordlist, but since De Laet himself had claimed to rely on manuscripts of contemporary Dutch navigators and traders, the vocabulary of the “Sankikans” has to be considered authentic. The wordlist published by De Laet in 1640 is much more extensive than Van Wassenaer’s, and probably reflects Dutch progress in learning the native languages. In addition to listing “Sankikan” names for numerals, De Laet also displayed “Sankikan” words for human body parts, gender names, the natural elements, and the names of animals.132

Another Indian-Dutch vocabulary indicating Dutch proficiency in communicating with the natives of New Netherland during the early WIC period was the unpublished and anonymous vocabulary included at the end of Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert’s journal of his expedition to the Mohawks and Oneidas in the winter of 1634-1635. The Fort Orange commander Marten Gerritsen dispatched Van den Bogaert on a diplomatic mission to the villages of the Iroquoian-speaking Mohawks and neighboring Oneidas who were increasingly important customers and allies. Some member of this expedition compiled an impressive Mohawk-Dutch wordlist that is currently considered “the earliest philological treatment of the Mohawk language in existence.” Like other Western

132 De Laet’s work was first published in 1625 and again in several revised editions in Dutch, Latin, and French in respectively 1630, 1633, and 1640. For De Laet’s interest in native wordlists and languages, see his descriptions of native languages throughout his Nieuwe Werelt ofte Beschrijvinghe van West-Indien (Leiden, 1630). See for instance 70, 73-74 (wordlists about Canadian Indians, taken by De Laet from French sources). On De Laet’s description of the “Sankikans” and their language, see his L’Histoire du Nouveau Monde ou description des Indes Occidentales (Leiden: Elzeviers, 1640), 80-81. This section is adequately translated by NNN, 57-60. For an interesting discussion of De Laet’s interest in American Indian peoples, see Jaap Jacobs, “Johannes de Laet en de Nieuwe Wereld,” in Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie 50 (The Hague, 1996): 109-130. The “Sankikans” were most likely Algonquian-speaking natives in what is now northern New Jersey.
explorers, Van den Bogaert pretended that he and his fellow countrymen could easily communicate with the Mohawks and Oneidas. By doing so, Van den Bogaert downplayed the Dutch dependency on the natives. On only one occasion in his diary did Van den Bogaert imply that he had to make use of Indian linguistic middlemen to converse with the Iroquois. While nothing is known about the problems the Dutch encountered when documenting the *Maquase spraeck* (“Mohawk language”), contemporary linguists believe that the Dutch must have gestured to learn the words for specific terms and phrases.133

In the light of both the complexity of the North American Indian languages and their considerable regional diversity, how was it possible for the Dutch to learn them in a relatively short period? First, the vocabularies documented by Van Wassenaer, De Laet, and also Meyndertsz van den Bogaert were primarily concerned with basic economic exchanges rather than displaying a comprehensive knowledge of the native tongues. The wordlists of all three Dutch authors strongly demonstrated the Dutch desire to facilitate trade relations with the natives. For instance, Van Wassenaer discussed the presumably Algonquian words for numbers in the context of intercultural commerce by pointing out “When they desire twenty of anything, they stick the ten fingers up and point with them

to the feet on which are ten toes.” Similarly, De Laet’s and Van den Bogaert’s vocabularies mainly deal with such topics as numerals, animals and other natural resources deemed valuable by the Dutch, and European material goods valued by the Indians. Van den Bogaert’s Mohawk wordlist even includes phrases and verbs such as cadadiiene (“to trade”), catteges issewe (“when shall you return”). Although the Mohawk-Dutch vocabulary also documents some Mohawk terms that do not bear any direct relation to commerce such as sinachkoo (“to exorcise the devil”) and adenocquat (“to make medicine”), the three Indian-Dutch wordlists noticeably lack an interest in Indian religious terms as well as phrases dealing with cultural customs.  

The second reason the Dutch quickly reached some level of understanding in native languages was that the Indians might have manipulated Dutch attempts to learn native tongues. By simplifying their languages, the Indian peoples made it much easier for the Dutch to learn the complex native languages that differed so much grammatically and morphologically from Dutch. The Dutch Reformed minister Jonas Michaelius accurately described this linguistic development in 1628. While Michaelius had been exposed to non-European languages during his tenure as minister at Fort Nassau on the West African Gold Coast from 1625 to 1628, he strongly expressed his disappointment in not being able to communicate Christianity effectively to the North American Indians. Michaelius reported:

Their language, which is the first thing to be employed with them, methinks is entirely peculiar. Many of our common people call it an easy language, which is

134 The quote of Wassenaer can be found at NN3, 73. On the phrases from Van den Bogaert’s expedition, see Michelson, “Wordlist,” 60 (“to trade”), 61 (“when shall you return”, “to exorcise the devil”, and “to make medicine”). In this respect it is important to note that Van den Bogaert was a surgeon who was interested in curing people. See A Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country, xx.
soon learned, but I am of a contrary opinion. For those who can understand their words to some extent and repeat them, fail greatly in the pronunciation and speak a broken language, like the language of Ashdod. For these people have difficult aspirates and many guttural letters, which are formed more in the throat than by the mouth, teeth and lips, to which our people not being accustomed, make a bold stroke at the thing and imagine that they have accomplished something wonderful. It is true one can easily learn as much as is sufficient for the purposes of trading, but this is done almost as much by signs with the thumb and fingers as by speaking; and this cannot be done in religious matters.135

Most contemporary linguistic studies of Indian-European language contacts support Michaelius’ views and agree that the vocabularies provided by Wassenaer and De Laet are simplified versions of more complicated original Algonquian words and grammar. Because the natives allowed the Dutch to use simplified versions of Indian languages to facilitate intercultural interactions, semi-informal trade languages or pidgins soon developed across New Netherland during the 1620s and 1630s. The best-documented pidgin to emerge during this period was the so-called “Delaware Jargon.” According to ethnolinguist Ives Goddard, this pidgin developed during the late 1620s, when recently arrived Dutch colonists and traders based at Fort Nassau in what is now central New Jersey attempted to learn the Unami-Delaware language of their Indian neighbors. The Dutch soon applied this Delaware Jargon to other regions of mid-Atlantic North America, and by the mid-1630s the simplified trade language had become “an established conventional system of communication” between the Algonquians and the Dutch in New Netherland.136


136 For this scholarship, see especially Ives Goddard, “The Delaware Jargon,” in Carol E. Hofecker, et al, ed. New Sweden in America (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1995): 137-149. For the quotation, see 143. See also Goddard, “The Use of Pidgins and Jargons on the East
At the same time, it should be stressed that the Iroquoian-speaking Mohawks did not communicate with the Dutch through this Delaware Jargon. According to Johannes Megapolensis, a Dutch Reformed minister at Rensselaerswyck from 1642 to 1648, his people also relied on a special trade language to facilitate exchange with the Mohawks. In his “Short Account of the Mohawk Indians,” published in Antwerp in 1644, Megapolensis reported “There is no Christian here who understands the language thoroughly; those who have lived here long can use a kind of jargon just sufficient to carry on trade with it, but they do not understand the fundamentals of the language.” Since the Mohawk language was radically different from that of their Algonquian neighbors, it is unlikely that the Delaware Jargon was used among the Mohawks.137

By simplifying their own languages in their interactions with the Dutch, the Indian peoples of mid-Atlantic North America did more than ease intercultural economic exchange. They also maintained control over their own communities, and kept the Dutch at arm’s length. The dominee Michaelius realized this when he wrote:

It also seems to us that they rather design to conceal their language from us than to properly communicate it, except in things that have to do with every day trade; saying that it is sufficient for us to understand them to this extent; and then they speak only half sentences, shortened words, and frequently name a dozen things and even more; yea, all things which have only a rude resemblance to each other, they frequently call by the same name. On the whole: it is a made-up, childish language; so that even those who can best of all speak with the savages, and get

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along well in trade, are nevertheless altogether in the dark and as bewildered, when they hear the savages talking among themselves.\(^{138}\)

Likewise, Megapolensis observed virtually the same process among the Mohawks on the Upper Hudson Valley. According to Megapolensis, the Mohawk language was almost impossible to learn. Not only was the grammar complex but the Mohawks also supposedly changed their language in interactions with the Dutch. When Megapolensis consulted the WIC commander of Fort Orange, who was in charge of maintaining WIC relations with the Mohawks, about the Mohawk propensity to manipulate their language, the commander told the Dutch minister that he “imagined they changed their language every two or three years.” Using language as “an arena of protected cultural knowledge,” the native peoples of New Netherland apparently only allowed the Dutch to learn basic communication skills that facilitated intercultural exchange but not much more. As Michaelius and Megapolensis noticed to their great irritation, the native peoples of mid-Atlantic North America successfully maintained cultural and religious autonomy by strengthening the linguistic boundaries between the Indians and the Dutch.\(^{139}\)

Although Michaelius expressed great frustration at not being able to communicate fully with the Indians of New Netherland, most Dutch traders and colonists accepted the simplified trade languages because it allowed them to obtain the valuable beaver pelts from the Indians. By the 1630s the use of the simplified Indian tongues had become so widespread that the Delaware Jargon had incorporated several Dutch words such as *gull*.


\(^{139}\) “A Short Account of the Mohawk Indians,” 41-42. For language as “an arena of protected cultural knowledge” see Van Zandt, “Negotiating Settlement,” 94. For a critique of this theory, see William A. Starna, “Assessing American Indian-Dutch Studies: Missed and Missing Opportunities,” *New York History* 84 (2003), 19.
(from the Dutch guilder) and *brandywine* (from the Dutch distilled liquor). Ironically, while not many European individuals in New Netherland learned to fluently speak one of the native languages, a large number of colonists succeeded in learning enough of the trade languages to facilitate daily economic exchanges with their Indian neighbors. These Indian jargons made possible the emergence of a “frontier exchange economy” in New Netherland, because natives and Europeans in mid-Atlantic North America frequently crossed cultural boundaries to exchange goods and services on an informal basis.¹⁴⁰

For example, many colonists traded with their Indian neighbors in order to obtain necessary foodstuffs. In September 1626, Isaac de Rasière, the newly arrived secretary of the WIC in New Netherland, reported to his superiors in Amsterdam that the colonists on Manhattan obtained corn and fish from local Algonquian Indians because the Company and the colonists were unable to feed themselves. Since most of these Dutch and other European immigrants were unfamiliar with intercultural trade at the time of their arrival in North America, it is very likely that they quickly learned the simplified trade languages to engage in their limited commerce. Another example in which the trade language was probably used was the unusual exchange between local Indians and Jan Price, a barber-surgeon, sometime in the early 1620s. According to WIC correspondence, Price had used his bloodletting techniques as a service to curious natives, and in return he received several furs from the Indians. Although we don’t know whether Price relied on the trade language, it would have been unusual if Price had not used some of the Indian

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words for body-parts to practice his bloodletting. The existence of simple Indian jargons rather than complex languages made it relatively easy for colonists to participate in cross-cultural exchange in mid-Atlantic North America.\textsuperscript{141}

5. The Beginnings of Intercultural Diplomacy in New Netherland, 1620-1635

Despite the ability of many colonists to communicate on a practical, every-day level with the various native peoples of New Netherland, more skill was needed for diplomacy as problems emerged from the relationship between the Dutch and the Indians. Although previous scholarship has argued that the trade jargons were sufficient to negotiate differences between the two groups before 1640 because their relationship during that time was solely based on intercultural commerce, it is clear from the documentary record in this period that the Dutch also made considerable use of formal diplomacy and official mediators. Especially after the founding of the WIC in 1621, the Dutch relationship with the natives became more complicated, as the Company established permanent forts and promoted colonization and agricultural development in New Netherland. Apart from facilitating intercultural commerce, diplomatic liaisons were

\textsuperscript{141} For the trade in foodstuffs, see the letter from Isaack de Rasiere to WIC Directors, September 22, 1626, in: F.C. Wieder, ed. De Stichting van New-York in Juli 1625: Reconstructies en Nieuwe Gegevens ontleen aan de van Rappard-Documenten (LV 26) (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1925), Document F: 171-172, 175 (examples of Fort Orange residents trading with Indians). This document is also available in a good English translation in A.J.F. van Laer, ed. and trans. Documents Relating to New Netherland, 1624-1626, in the Henry E. Huntington Library (Publications Americana, Folio Series, No.1), (San Marino: The Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, 1924), Document F. On the exchange between Price and the Indians, see Bachman, Peltries or Plantations, 52, note 27. I will discuss the frontier exchange economy in New Netherland in more detail in chapter 5 of the dissertation.
therefore instrumental in negotiating land-transactions in resolving explosive intercultural crises such as theft and murder.142

Because the Dutch colonial project in North America remained dependent upon the cooperation of the Indians throughout the 1630s, Dutch frontier diplomats pragmatically adapted to the customs and rituals of Indian diplomacy. As we have seen in chapter one, this was not unusual since Dutch navigators and traders operating in West Africa and Southeast Asia in the 1590s had also accommodated to local indigenous diplomatic traditions to facilitate business. In addition, since the experiment to educate two Indians as interpreters in the Republic had failed, Dutch colonial authorities recognized that their own intercultural diplomats needed to acquire at least some proficiency in Indian languages and customs.

During the pre-WIC period (ca. 1610-1621), Dutch trade companies operating in mid-Atlantic North America relied on individual traders and navigators to negotiate with the local Indian peoples. Since the Dutch primarily visited North America at this time to obtain beaver pelts, most of the interactions between the Dutch and the natives were centered on the exchange of animal hides and pelts for trade goods such as beads and metal tools. While these transactions could be managed by using trade languages and signs, more sophisticated negotiations were necessary when the Dutch established Fort Nassau on the Upper Hudson Valley sometime in 1614. Because of its significance as a main waterway providing strategic access to a multitude of native peoples such as the

142 Feister, “Linguistic Communication,” 33, argues that the trade jargons were sufficient to resolve intercultural differences before 1640. For the history of New Netherland in this early period from a WIC point of view, see Rink, Holland on the Hudson, chapters 3-4; Bachman, Peltries or Plantations; Thomas J. Condon, New York Beginnings: The Commercial Origins of New Netherland (New York: New York University Press, 1968). For an overview of Indian-Dutch relations in this period, see Trelease, Indian Affairs in Colonial New York, chapter 2.
Mahicans, the Iroquois, and the native peoples of the Saint Lawrence Valley, the Dutch quickly recognized the usefulness of establishing a main trading post in the region. The construction of forts was not unusual, since Dutch traders also established permanent fortified posts on the Wild Coast of South America and in West Africa during the early seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{143}

Fort Nassau was located on the lands of the Mahicans, it is therefore likely that Dutch traders negotiated with these natives about constructing a fort on their territory. Unfortunately, there are no documentary records that reveal any information about possible negotiations, notwithstanding persistent rumors about a possible treaty made between the Dutch and Indians in 1614. Although any reconstructions of Mahican-Dutch relations in this period are problematic due to the lack of documented sources, traders probably provided Indians with material goods as a tribute and sign of friendship. Dutch merchants were accustomed to doing this in other parts of the world. For example, in West Africa, Dutch merchants frequently paid tribute in the form of material goods to local kingdoms in return for the privilege of constructing trading posts. Likewise, the Mahicans probably accepted the Dutch gifts, since the latter’s trade goods had both material and spiritual value for the Indians. In addition, the Mahicans likely welcomed a small trading post on their lands, because it guaranteed easy access to prestigious goods such as iron and metal tools.\textsuperscript{144}


\textsuperscript{144} The controversy about a purported treaty in the early 1610s is expertly covered by Charles T. Gehring, William A. Starna, and William N. Fenton, “The Tawagonshi Treaty of
According to De Laet, Captain Hendrick Christiaensen was the first commander of the small fort, which indicates that Christiaensen must have overseen the negotiations with the Mahicans that led to the construction of Fort Nassau. Shortly after the fort was completed, Christiaensen appointed the merchant-clerk Jacob Eelkens as his successor. While not much is known about Eelkens, he probably participated as a crewmember of Christiaensen’s previous expeditions to the Upper Hudson Valley before 1614. As I have suggested earlier in this chapter, Eelkens may also have served as a hostage among the Mahicans while Christiaensen transported two Indians to the United Provinces in the hope of training them as interpreters. In his position as superior commander of Fort Nassau, Eelkens was responsible for maintaining trade and diplomatic relations with the Mahicans and Mohawks, and as such he probably became acquainted with their languages and diplomatic customs. Eelkens quickly gained prominence as an intercultural diplomat on the Upper Hudson Valley. Almost twenty years later, in 1633, London merchants hired Eelkens as an independent trader because he was “very well acquainted with the said Indians, having often traded with them, and speakinge theire language.”

At the same time, relations between the Dutch and the Indians at Fort Nassau were not entirely amicable. The Mahicans objected to the Dutch trade with the Mohawk Iroquois, who lived west from Fort Nassau. Intent upon limiting access to the prestigious European goods to themselves, the Mahicans began to pressure the Dutch to stop inviting

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145 Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 88-89 discusses Eelkens’ career. For the quotation, see the deposition of “William fforde of Lymehouse” in November 1633 in *DRCHSNY*, 1: 74.
the Mohawks to travel across Mahican lands to Fort Nassau. Although not much is
known about these incidents, Wassenaer noted that the Dutch abandoned Fort Nassau in
1617 not only because of frequent flooding, but also because “the [Indian] nation there
was somewhat discontented, and not easy to live with.” Since the fur trade remained
profitable for the Dutch trade companies, Fort Nassau was quickly relocated a short
distance downriver in 1617. Relations with the Mahicans continued to be tense. In this
respect it should be remembered that natives killed Hendrick Christiaensen, the founder
of Fort Nassau, during a trading expedition on the Hudson Valley in 1619. While the
ethnicity of these killers remains unclear, angry Mahicans may very well have been
responsible.146

The tensions at Fort Nassau resulted in yet another form of intercultural exchange.
Irritated by the “discontented” behavior of the Mahicans and alarmed at the killing of
Christiaensen, several prominent Dutch traders threatened to retaliate against the
Mahicans and other Indians. After having been unable to establish trade relations with the
wary Mahicans in the spring of 1620, the experienced intercultural trader Jacob Eelkens
and the veteran fur trader Willem Jorisz Hontom sailed downriver, and, out of frustration,
took hostage several unidentified Algonquian-speaking Indians. Eelkens and Hontom
eventually released the hostages after the Indians paid them an unspecified amount, and
they paid in beads. While the exact nature of these beads has not been established, they
presumably were beads made from seashells that were generally found on the beaches of
Long Island. Since Dutch traders were familiar with the mercantile value of cowry shells

146 “From the ‘Historisch Verhael,’” NNN, 67 (quotation) and note 2 on the same page.
For the short-lived career of Fort Nassau see Dunn, Mohicans and Their Lands, 82-84. See also
Paul R. Huey, “Aspects of Continuity and Change in Colonial Dutch Material Culture at Fort
in West Africa, Dutch traders like Eelkens and Hontom assumed that the white and purple shells the Algonquians called sewant or wampum also formed a currency. Though the natives considered wampum to have spiritual and ritual significance rather than economic value, Dutch traders subsequently began to aggressively market wampum as a medium of intercultural exchange.\footnote{For the expedition of Hontom and Eelkens, see Hart, \textit{Prehistory of New Netherland}, 37, 55. Hart also provides short biographies of Hontom (60-61) and Eelkens (54-55). The literature on the use of sewant and wampum is extensive. For a good introduction, see Lynn Ceci, “Native Wampum as a Peripheral Resource in the Seventeenth-Century World-System,” in: Laurence M. Hauptman and James D. Wherry, eds. \textit{The Pequots in Southern New England: The Fall and Rise of an American Indian Nation} (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990): 48-63. For sewant/wampum use among the Iroquois, see especially Richter, \textit{Ordeal of the Longhouse}, 84-85; Fenton, \textit{Great Law and the Longhouse}, chapter 16. In this dissertation I have used the name wampum rather than sewant because the term wampum is much more common in the historiography. Both terms are Algonquian words but reflect regional origins, wampum being from New England and sewant from the Long Island area.}

Emboldened by their successful extortion, Eelkens and Hontom replicated their action when they visited the Upper Hudson Valley again in the spring of 1622. This expedition was the last voyage of independent trade companies to New Netherland before the WIC proclaimed its monopoly over the region. In the fall of 1621, the newly chartered WIC ordered the independent Dutch trade company that managed Fort Nassau to send out one final expedition to dismantle the fort and return its garrison to the Republic. Eelkens and Hontom accompanied this expedition. Realizing that their bullying behavior of two years earlier had alienated the Indians of New Netherland, Hontom and Eelkens resorted to even more force. They captured a headman of the local “Sickenanes,” and threatened to cut off his head if the Indians did not pay a large amount of sewant. Although the available documents are scarce and contradictory, after the “Sickenanes” paid the required quantity of sewant, Hontom and Eelkens had an
argument. Hontom gained the upper hand by brutally murdering the captured headman. Signifying his contempt for Indians who had proved so unwilling to trade, Hontom publicly emasculated the native hostage and hung up the severed penis on the mast of a Dutch vessel where it was plain for the natives to see.\[148\]

Eelkens’ and Hontom’s violence considerably weakened Indian-Dutch relations in mid-Atlantic North America by the time the WIC deployed its first agents in New Netherland in 1624. It is not clear that the directors of the Amsterdam WIC Chamber understood this, but their formal instructions to the first Commandeurs of New Netherland strongly reflected the Company’s desire to avoid any problems with the native peoples. In the Provisional Order of March 30, 1624, the Company instructed officials in New Netherland to “take especial care, whether in trading or in other matters, faithfully to fulfill their promises to the Indians or other neighbors and not to give them any offense without cause.” In addition, in early 1625 Company directors in Amsterdam ordered Willem Verhulst, one of the first Directors of New Netherland, to take the local natives seriously and to make treaties with them for political and commercial purposes.\[149\]

\[148\] Huey, “Aspects of Continuity and Change in Colonial Dutch Material Culture,” 14-17 discusses the 1621-1622 expedition of Ëelkens and Hontom. The brutal behavior of Hontom and the killing of the Indian leader was related by Bastiaen Jansz Krol at an official interrogation in Amsterdam in June 1634. Krol said that a Mohawk headman had told him the story of Hontom while Krol was commander of Fort Orange in the late 1620s. This formal interrogation is transcribed in A. Eekhof, Bastiaen Jansz. Krol: Krankenbezoeker, Kommies, en Kommandeur van Nieuw-Nederland (1595-1645) (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1910), xxvi-xxvii (document 32). For an interpretation and English translation of this interrogation, see Charles T. Gehring and William A. Starna, “Dutch and Indians in the Hudson Valley: The Early Period,” The Hudson Valley Regional Review 9, No. 2 (1992), 15-16. Nicolaes van Wassenaer mentions that the Indian leader was from the “Sickenanes” and argues that Ëelkens was primarily responsible for the incident rather than Hontom. See “From the ‘Historisch Verhael,’” NNN, 86.

\[149\] The official Indian policies of the Amsterdam Directors of the WIC are provided in the documentary collection of A.J.F. van Laer, Documents Relating to New Netherland, documents A, C, E. For the quotation see document A, point 18. See also the discussion of these instructions in Otto, “New Netherland Frontier,” 128-135.
However, because only a few documents and writings have survived from New Netherland’s history through the 1630s, hardly anything is known about the diplomatic relations between the Dutch and Indians in this period. From the sources that are available it is clear that the Company established small settlements and forts at several locations in 1624, including Fort Orange nearby the site of old Fort Nassau. While the WIC sources are silent on the Indian’s reaction, it is likely that local colonial officials compensated the Mahicans and other Indian polities with trade goods and perhaps also wampum. In the summer of 1626, for example, the newly appointed WIC Director Peter Minuit oversaw the famous transaction in which the Dutch bought Manhattan Island from local Algonquians for the price of 60 Dutch guilders. Although not much is known about the native motivations for participating in these early transactions, it is likely that access to prestigious trade goods was an important consideration for some headmen. In addition, like other native peoples of Northeastern North America, the Algonquian peoples of New Netherland viewed the transactions with the Dutch as only transfer of the rights to use the lands rather than the transfer of actual ownership.150

Because of its strategic access to the native peoples in the hinterland of mid-Atlantic North America, the Noordrivier (“North River”) or Upper Hudson River Valley became the most important theatre of intercultural diplomacy in New Netherland during the 1620s and 1630s. After the founding of Fort Orange in 1624 marked the return of Dutch traders to the area, the Mohawks, the Mahicans, and Algonquian-speaking “French

wilden” from the Saint Lawrence Valley quickly renewed their ongoing conflict over who could control access to the valuable Dutch trading partners. Although the Amsterdam directors had formally instructed its executive officials in New Netherland to stay out of intra-Indian hostilities for fear of dragging the Company into a costly conflict that could endanger trade, Daniel van Krieckenbeeck, the commis or chief mercantile agent of the WIC at Fort Orange, in the spring of 1626 agreed to assist a Mahican warparty with six of his men in a raid against a Mohawk village. According to most scholarly interpretations, Krieckenbeeck was primarily motivated by the desire to punish the Mohawks for restraining the “French wilden” from exchanging furs for wampum at Fort Orange. By joining the Mahicans, the WIC official also expected to strengthen relations with the Indians whose lands surrounded Fort Orange. Finally, Krieckenbeeck probably hoped that a display of Dutch firearms and armor would impress both the Mohawks and the Mahicans. In any case, Mohawk warriors successfully ambushed the Mahican-WIC warparty, and they killed no less than twenty-four Mahicans and four colonists, including Krieckenbeeck.151

Upon hearing of this embarrassing defeat, the newly arrived Director Pieter Minuit dispatched veteran trader Peter Barentsen to the Mohawks to protest the killings of several WIC personnel. Although not much is known about Barentsen, the available documentary record suggests that he was perhaps the most experienced intercultural

151 For Krieckenbeeck’s fateful decision and the dramatic outcome, see “From the ‘Historisch Verhael,’” NNN, 84-85; Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, 56, 89-90; Dunn, Mohicans and Their Land, 96-100. Van Wassenaer, 85, describes that two unnamed “Portuguese” men were members of Krieckenbeeck’s party that assisted the Mahicans. The presence of these Portuguese men is curious but it is possible that they were hired by the WIC as intercultural mediators because they spoke one or more trade languages that were in use in the Atlantic world.
diplomat of the WIC during this period. According to Wassenaer, Barentsen “can understand all the tribes thereabout; he trades with the ‘Sinnekox’, ‘Wappenox’, ‘Maquas’, and ‘Maikans’, so that he visits all these peoples with sloops and trades with them in friendship.” In addition, in the fall of 1626 Barentsen had renewed trade relations with the “Sickenanes” who had lost one of their headmen in the gruesome hostage-taking incident in 1622. Although scholars have never explained how Barentsen acquired this proficiency in dealing with Native Americans, Wassenaer points out that Barentsen became well acquainted with Indians during an extensive trade expedition in 1619 that brought him into friendly and hostile contact with native peoples in the Caribbean, the Wild Coast, and Spanish Florida. While the languages and cultures of these peoples were clearly different from those of the Algonquians and Iroquois in New Netherland, Barentsen probably developed ideas about how to deal with native peoples during these voyages in the West Indies.152

In council with Mohawk headmen Barentsen was told that the Mohawks “wished to excuse their act, on the plea that they had never set themselves against” the Dutch before. Although the violent death of the commander of Fort Orange was a blow to the prestige of the WIC, Barentsen apparently had no orders to demand the punishment of the killers of Krieckenbeeck. Instead, his meeting with the Mohawks was mainly concerned with repairing the damage in Mohawk-WIC relations, so that the supply of furs from Iroquoia to the Dutch would continue to grow. The Mohawks had a similar desire to maintain direct access to the valuable trade goods at Fort Orange. According to historian

152 For Van Wassenaer on Barentsen, see NNN, 85-87. For Van Wassenaer on Barentsen’s expedition to the Caribbean, see the original Dutch edition: Van Wassenaer, Historisch Verhael, volume 12: 39-40. Jameson did not include this interesting discussion of Barentsen’s previous career because it did not pertain to New Netherland.
Daniel Richter, the Indian leaders apologized to Barentsen for the rash behavior of their young warriors, and to accommodate the WIC diplomat, they practiced the traditional Iroquoian Condolence Rituals, establishing a climate of goodwill and peace between two parties.153

While Barentsen took an appeasing diplomatic approach, Isaack de Rasière, the Company secretary, hinted at more violent means to restore Dutch honor and trade on the Upper Hudson Valley. In September 1626, De Rasière informed his superiors in Amsterdam that he was soon going to Fort Orange in an attempt to negotiate peace between the Mohawks and the “French wilden.” However, if this mediation would fail, De Rasière asked the WIC directors for the authorization to employ “50 or 60 men” to lead an armed expedition against the native peoples of the Upper Hudson Valley.

Although it is unclear which Indians De Rasière wanted to punish, it is possible that he targeted the Mohawks because they had recently killed Krieckenbeeck and several other colonists. In the absence of any further surviving records of this period, it is unknown what course De Rasière actually took. However, it is unlikely that the Heeren XIX would have authorized De Rasière’s idea for a military intervention. The Company was still recovering financially from the costly loss of Salvador de Bahia in Brazil in 1625, and it did not want to become embroiled in an expensive war in North America that might endanger the profitable fur trade. Neglected by the Heeren XIX and with human resources stretched thin across the large mid-Atlantic region, the WIC government of New Netherland consequently pursued a pragmatic policy toward the Mohawks, staying out of

153 The quotation can be found in “From the ‘Historisch Verhael,’” NNN, 85. For Richter’s interpretation of this meeting see his Ordeal of the Longhouse, 56. On the Condolence Rituals, see Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, chapter 2. See also Fenton, Great Law of the Longhouse, chapter 9.
the ongoing Mohawk-Mahican war and continuing commercial relations with both native
groups.\textsuperscript{154}

Despite this neutrality, Indian-Dutch relations in the Upper Hudson Valley
remained troublesome throughout the late 1620s and early 1630s. WIC diplomacy with
the Indians was so ineffective in this period because the commanders at Fort Orange, who
were responsible for Indian affairs on the Upper Hudson Valley, were often more
concerned with the furthering of their own careers than developing durable diplomatic

ties with the Mohawks and Mahicans. For instance, the veteran trader Barentsen, who had
been so useful in avoiding a Mohawk-Dutch war in the wake of Krieckenbeeck’s death,
left Fort Orange permanently in late September 1626 to continue his commercial career
in Europe. In addition, Bastiaen Jansz Krol, Krieckenbeeck’s successor as commander of
Fort Orange, focused more on his own social mobility in the colony than on practicing
Indian diplomacy. Minuit and his councilors had appointed Krol sometime in the early
fall of 1626 because “he was acquainted with the language” of the natives. While Rasière
does not indicate which Indian language this was, historian Willem Frijhoff has recently
suggested that Krol may have learned an Indian language during his tenure as comforter
of the sick at Manhattan from 1624 to 1626 in order to preach among the local
Algonquians. Since not many Dutchmen were familiar with native languages at this time

\textsuperscript{154} For Rasière and his request to be able to punish the Mohawks, see his letter of
September 22, 1626 in Wieder, \textit{De Stichting van New York in 1625}, Document F: 171. See also
90-91 suggests the influence of Brazilian affairs upon WIC policies in New Netherland. One
reason why De Rasière may have never implemented his plans is because he eventually fell out of
favor with WIC directors in Amsterdam in the late 1620s. In 1628 or 1629 he was probably
already back in the Republic. He eventually made a minor career as a WIC official in Brazil
where he frequently appears in the surviving WIC correspondence. See \textit{NNN}, 100-101.
in New Netherland, Krol’s possible acquaintance with the Delaware Jargon helps explain why this lay-preacher was selected as commander at Fort Orange.\footnote{For Barentsen leaving New Netherland, see “From the ‘Historisch Verhael,’” \textit{NNN}, 87. For the appointment of Krol, see the letter of Rasière in Wieder, \textit{De stichting van New York in 1625}, 163. For Frijhoff on Krol, see Frijhoff, “The West India Company and the Reformed Church: Neglect or Concern?” \textit{DHM} 70, No. 3 (1997), 61-65.}

Very few sources have survived describing Krol’s activities at Fort Orange during the late 1620s. However, the export of beaver and otter furs from New Netherland increased during these years. Although it is unknown what the exact role of Krol was in the burgeoning cross-cultural trade, the ongoing growth of the fur trade suggests that Indian-Dutch relations at Fort Orange were amicable during this period. At the same time, Krol made use of his influence as official liaison between the Dutch and Indians to further his own career. In the fall of 1628, the Mohawks had decisively beaten the Mahicans and the latter were forced to evacuate their former lands north and west of Fort Orange. After news of the Mahican defeat reached the Republic sometime in early 1629, the prominent Amsterdam WIC director Kilaen van Rensselaer quickly recalled Krol to the United Provinces. Because Van Rensselaer was interested in developing a patroonship or private colony on the potentially rich agricultural lands surrounding Fort Orange, the ambitious merchant hired the equally ambitious Krol as his personal agent to buy the lands that had just been abandoned by the Mahicans.\footnote{The best discussion of Krol’s activities in this period is provided in Eekhof, \textit{Bastiaen Jansz Krol}, 35-37. For the growing export of beaver and otter furs from New Netherland in this period (1628-1632), see Joannes de Laet, \textit{Historie oftie Jaerlyck Verhael van de Verrichtinghen der Gecootroyerde West-Indische Compagnie} (Leiden: Bonaventuer and Abraham Elsevier, 1644), 29-30. See also Zegenrijk Gewest, Table on 181.}

When the \textit{Heeren XIX}, hoping to reduce the cost of the fledgling colony, opened up most of New Netherland for private colonization in June 1629, Krol returned to Fort Orange.
Orange to execute Van Rensselaer’s instructions. Using his skills as intercultural diplomat, Krol bought a large portion of lands from the Mahicans in 1630 and 1631. The Mahicans, having lost access to the lands following their defeat by the Mohawks in 1628, willingly transferred these lands for valuable trade goods. In the meantime, Van Rensselaer rewarded Krol for his useful services by helping him become the successor of Director Minuit in early 1632. While Krol’s tenure as Director of New Netherland ended in the spring of 1633 after Rensselaer temporarily lost influence as WIC director, Krol’s alliance with the prominent WIC director suggests that Krol was very concerned with social mobility in colonial society.157

Krol’s interest in colonial office may have led him to neglect the intricacies of intercultural diplomacy. During the last months of Krol’s tenure in the spring of 1633 the notorious trader Hans Hontom returned to New Netherland as the newly appointed commander of Fort Orange. Krol did nothing to prevent Hontom from assuming his command. Krol’s silence was remarkable since he later admitted in 1634 that during his tenure as Fort Orange commander, a “leader of the Maquaas” had personally informed him about Hontom’s cruel behavior in 1622. It is unknown why the WIC directors in Amsterdam had appointed Hontom, but the appointment clearly showed how uninformed metropolitan officials were about intercultural relations on the Upper Hudson Valley.158


158 The appointment of Hontom is discussed in Frijhoff, Wegen van Evert Willemsz, 667. Krol’s behavior is described in his own testimony made in 1634, see Eekhof, Bastiaen Jansz Krol, xxvi-xxvii (document 32) (“a leader of the Maquaas”).
The situation at Fort Orange became even more complicated when Hontom’s former colleague, Jacob Eelkens, also returned to the Upper Hudson Valley in the spring of 1633. Illustrative of the era in which individuals often changed state-loyalties for personal betterment, the Dutch trader Eelkens had hired himself out to London merchants seeking access to the profitable fur trade around Fort Orange. After Eelkens had bluffed his way past Fort Amsterdam at Manhattan, he quickly teamed up with his former colleague Hontom at Fort Orange to obtain beaver pelts from the neighboring Indians. In an attempt to prevent Eelkens from trading with the Indians, the newly appointed Director Wouter van Twiller dispatched none other than his predecessor Krol to Fort Orange with an armed escort. Although a reconstruction of the actual events at Fort Orange is problematic in the light of fragmentary and contradictory sources, Indian-WIC relations quickly deteriorated after the Mohawks and Mahicans learned that Hontom had returned to the Upper Hudson Valley.159

While the Indians were willing to exchange beaver furs with Eelkens because the latter had an extensive supply of English trade goods with him, the natives were heartily upset about the presence of Hontom in their midst. Upon arriving at the fort in the summer of 1633, Krol observed that “Saggodyochtta, general-commander of the Maquaas” refused to continue trading at Fort Orange after he recognized Hontom. Indicating that Hontom’s brutal killing of the “Sickenenas” headman in 1622 had been well-remembered by the neighboring native peoples, Saggodyochtta told Krol that

159 There are two versions of this confusing episode. One is provided by Krol in his testimony in 1634; see Eekhof, Bastiaen Jansz Krol, xxvi-xxix (document 32). The other is provided by the November 1633 testimonies of Eelkens and several English sailors who accompanied him to the Upper Hudson Valley. Their testimony can be found in DRCHSNY 1: 72-81. See also Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, 88-89; John H. van Schaick, “Showdown at Fort Orange,” DHM 65, no. 3 (1992): 37-45.
Hontom “is a rogue, I do not want to trade with him.” Krol, who understood the Mohawk language following his tenure as commander of Fort Orange, was told by other Mohawks that they would kill the new commander as soon as they had a chance. The Mohawks dramatically illustrated their anger about Hontom by killing livestock that belonged to Kiliaen van Rensselaer and by burning down a WIC yacht. The tense situation at Fort Orange was finally defused when the Mohawks concluded that the Company garrison was willing to fight rather than give up Hontom. Realizing that a direct attack on Fort Orange would endanger valuable trade relations with the WIC, the Mohawk headmen eventually persuaded the warriors to cancel the siege of Fort Orange.160

Even in the face of the hostile behavior of the Mohawks, WIC officials in New Netherland only slowly recognized the need to improve relations with the Indians at Fort Orange. Perhaps because the WIC government at Manhattan did not dare to insult their superiors in Amsterdam, Hontom was not recalled. It was only after Hontom was killed in a dispute with a Dutch colonist in April 1634 that the WIC government finally recognized the importance of establishing closer ties with the native peoples of the Upper Hudson Valley. While the Mahicans remained close trade partners of the Company, the relationship between the WIC and the Mohawks and other Iroquois continued to deteriorate and “trade was going very badly.” After he received warnings from Mohawk and other Iroquois traders that they would take their highly priced furs to Indian middlemen who were allied with the French, Marten Gerritsen, the next commander of Fort Orange, dispatched the barber-surgeon Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert and

160 The quotations can be found in Eekhoff, Bastiaen Jansz. Krol, xxviii (“Saggodryochta”), xxix (“I do not want to trade with him”), xxix (Krol understanding Mohawk language and Mohawk burning down yacht and killing livestock). About the Mohawk siege of Fort Orange, see Frijhoff, Wegen van Evert Willemsz, 669. See also Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, 90.
two other WIC employees to make the expedition to the Mohawks and the “Sinnekens” with which this chapter began. In addition, in the light of the recent troubles at Fort Orange in 1633, Gerritsen probably also instructed Van den Bogaert to establish good will among the Mohawks who had been so angered by Hontom.\(^{161}\)

Since other scholars have recounted Van den Bogaert’s mission to the Iroquois in great detail, it is not necessary here to discuss the 1634 expedition once again. However, several issues regarding Van den Bogaert’s diplomatic journey need to be looked at in more detail. First, why was this individual involved in the unusual diplomatic visit? Although almost nothing is known about his life and career before December 1634, Van den Bogaert likely came in close contact with the Mohawks while he was stationed at Fort Orange. According to his diary of the expedition, Van den Bogaert and his men spoke some Mohawk. In addition, as a barber-surgeon with specialized knowledge of the body, Van den Bogaert may have been an important person for the Indians, who held healers in great esteem. It is significant to recall that a barber-surgeon named Jan Price obtained beaver furs in exchange for bleeding some Indians in the mid-1620s. Significantly too, Van den Bogaert on several occasions noted that he was invited to watch Iroquois shamans perform curing rituals.\(^{162}\)

\(^{161}\) Frijhoff, *Wegen van Evert Willemisz*, 669 (death of Hontom). Van den Bogaert, *A Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country*, 1 (“trade was going very badly”) discusses the origins of Van den Bogaert’s mission. Bruce Trigger suggested that Van den Bogaert was also sent to the Mohawks to apologize to them about Hontom. See Trigger’s review of Van den Bogaert’s translated and edited account in: *New York History* 70, No. 4 (1989): 449-450.

\(^{162}\) Van den Bogaert’s expedition has been discussed in detail by Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 90-93. For the blood-letting example, see Bachman, *Peltties or Plantations*, 52, note 27. Van den Bogaert relates how he was invited to watch a curing ceremony in his *A Journey to Mohawk and Oneida Country*, 17-18. See also the commentary of Van den Bogaert’s observations in William N. Fenton, *Great Law of the Longhouse*, 271.
Secondly, why did Van den Bogaert and his fellow envoys prove to be so inept at Iroquois diplomatic protocol? As we have seen in the beginning of this chapter, the WIC mission left for Iroquoia without taking along a large number of trade goods that could have been distributed as gifts among the Mohawks and their western neighbors. Since commander Gerritsen wanted to improve relations with the Iroquois in the aftermath of the crisis involving Hontom, it is surprising that neither he nor any other WIC employee apparently understood the significance of gift-giving to facilitate diplomacy with the Indian peoples of mid-Atlantic North America. While Van den Bogaert and his men carried small items with them as exchange objects to obtain food and services from individual Indian men and women, Iroquois headmen publicly scolded the three WIC diplomats for visiting their country without bringing an adequate number of gifts with them. It was only because of the growing material dependency of the Mohawks and Oneidas upon European trade goods that Van den Bogaert was able to secure ongoing trade relations with the Iroquois. Although the Dutch had been trading with the Mohawks and the Mahicans for more than two decades by the time of Van den Bogaert’s journey, the Dutch had still not made any formal treaties with their important native trading partners.163

The limited Dutch expertise in intercultural diplomacy was also revealed in other parts of New Netherland during the early 1630s. Barely one year after the founding of the patroonship Swanendael (“Valley of Swans”) at the southern estuary of the Zuidrivier (“South River”) or Delaware River in 1631, all the colonists of this small private colony

163 Van den Bogaert, *A Journey to Mohawk and Oneida Country*, 13-14, discusses the tensions generated by the Dutch lack of providing gifts to the Iroquois. See also Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 90-93, about these problems.
were brutally murdered by local Algonquians. According to the experienced cosmopolitan trader David Pietersz de Vries who investigated the destruction of Swanendael in December 1632, a local native man told him, through an unnamed Dutch interpreter who spoke the Delaware Jargon, that a misunderstanding about a Dutch political symbol had led to the deadly Indian attack on Swanendael. The unidentified Indian told De Vries that after colonists had affixed a shield with the coat of arms of the Province of Holland on a tree to designate Swanendael as being officially claimed by the Dutch, some Indians had taken off the shield to use it for pipe-making materials. The local Dutch commander Gillis Hossit or Hosset was infuriated at this insult to Dutch claims, and he demanded in a council with local Indians that the perpetrators be brought to Swanendael for punishment. After the Indians presented Hossit with “a token of the dead” perpetrator to indicate that they had implemented justice themselves, the Swanendael commander became even angrier with the Indians for not bringing the culprit to him first. Feeling insulted by the ungrateful Hossit, the Indians subsequently took revenge by wiping out the colony in a surprise attack.164

Although the unidentified Indian man may have embellished or simplified the story about the stolen coat of arms in the face of possible Dutch retaliation, Hossit’s behavior demonstrated that Dutch intercultural diplomats lacked a sophisticated understanding of Indian diplomacy. This was especially remarkable since Hossit had been in close contact with Indians in New Netherland since at least the summer of 1629. At that time Hossit persuaded local natives to sell a portion of their lands at Delaware Bay to the Dutch in return for unspecified merchandise. Hossit’s inability to practice Indian diplomacy other than land transactions and economic exchange typified the structural weaknesses of Dutch intercultural diplomats in New Netherland during this period. Instead of deescalating the conflict by allowing the natives to resolve the incident of the stolen coat of arms themselves, the impatient Hossit pressured the Indians to bring the suspect to Swanendael for punishment by the colonists. For the Dutch commander it was clearly unacceptable that the Indians exacted their own form of justice in a case involving the theft of a Dutch coat of arms. To let the Indians do so would have sent a message of Dutch weakness to the natives. However, by scolding instead of rewarding the Indians who had killed the individual who stole the coat of arms, Hossit incurred the anger of the Indians for whom reciprocity was an important social value in diplomatic relations.165

165 For Hossit at the Delaware Bay in 1629, see Weslager, Dutch Explorers, 87-88. For Hossit as commander at Swanendael see Weslager, Dutch Explorers, 92-93. The land-sale of June 1629 is provided in English translation in DRCHSNY 1: 43. Hossit also functioned briefly as an agent of Van Rensselaer to buy lands from the Mahicans in August 1630, see DRCHSNY 14: 1-2. See also Dunn, Mohicans and Their Land, 132, and 279, No. 1. On the significance of reciprocity in Indian diplomacy, see for instance David Murray, Indian Giving: Economies of Power in Indian-White Exchanges (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 2000), chapter 1; Peter Cook, “Symbolic and Material Exchange in Intercultural Diplomacy: The French and the Hodenosaunee in the Early Eighteenth Century,” in Jo-Anne Fiske, Susan Sleeper-Smith, and William Wicken, eds. New Faces of the Fur Trade: Selected Papers of the Seventh North American Fur Trade
Fortunately for the Dutch, the experienced cross-cultural trader De Vries understood the significance of taking a conciliatory tone and distributing presents while negotiating with Indians. While De Vries initially expressed a desire to take bloody revenge upon the Indians who had destroyed Swanendael, he quickly realized the necessity of pursuing a more pragmatic diplomatic approach in order to be able to continue commercial relations in the Zuidrivier. After all, the primary motive of his expedition was commercial; Amsterdam merchants had instructed De Vries to hunt whales and to obtain beaver pelts from local Indians, even if the latter was illegal in the face of the WIC monopoly. After having met with headmen of Indian communities in a formal council, De Vries and the native leaders subsequently “made peace.” As a sign of friendship, De Vries provided the Indian delegates with “some presents of duffels, bullets, hatchets, and various Nuremberg trinkets.” Furthermore, throughout the rest of his trade voyage along the Zuidrivier from December 1633 to February 1634, De Vries, with the valuable expertise of his unnamed interpreter, was careful enough to meet with other local native headmen and to distribute gifts among them to secure trade relations and to avoid hostilities. Only intercultural diplomats such as David de Vries, who were willing to take seriously the need to adopt Indian customs, were able to secure peaceful relations with the native peoples of mid-Atlantic North America.166

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166 For De Vries, see Narratives of Early Pennsylvania, 18 (“as they dwelt in no fixed place”), 17 (“made peace” and distribution of various gifts), 19-26 (rest of De Vries’ voyage).
6. Conclusion

After the failed experiments with sign language and linguistic middlemen, the Dutch attempted to establish a reliable form of communication with the Indians by training Native Americans as intercultural diplomats in the United Provinces. While the experiment with Indian interpreters from North America quickly failed because the native individuals that were selected refused to cooperate, in northeastern Brazil a group of Potiguar Indians actually requested to be taken to the Republic in order to strengthen Indian-Dutch relations. When the WIC eventually established a colonial presence in Brazil during the early 1630s, the Company made extensive use of the Potiguar mediators to establish diplomatic relations with various Indian peoples. At the same time, the Dutch in New Netherland were forced to learn native languages and indigenous forms of diplomacy when dealing with Indian peoples.

The different political and economic contexts provide the most profound explanation for the divergent development of Indian-Dutch communication and diplomacy in colonial Brazil and New Netherland. In Brazil, the Potiguars and other indigenous polities viewed the Protestant Dutch invaders as allies in an ongoing war against the Catholic Portuguese. While some relations remained tense, most notably with the Tarairius of Rio Grande, intercultural diplomats were able to bring Indians and Dutch together with relatively little difficulty because each side needed the other as a military ally. Although there were major cultural differences between the Dutch and the native Brazilian peoples, practical needs brought the two sides together. In contrast, Dutch-Indian relations in mid-Atlantic North America were often marred by cultural misunderstandings. While the various Indian jargons enabled many colonists in New
Netherland to interact with natives on an informal level, Dutch officials were unable and unwilling to accommodate fully to Indian diplomatic protocols. The trade jargons were sufficient for trade but not for complex political negotiations.

The continuing problems at Fort Orange and the destruction of Swanendael dramatically illustrated that experienced intercultural diplomats were hard to come by among the Dutch in New Netherland by 1635. Dutch colonial officials who were responsible for managing Indian diplomacy often revealed that they were more interested in furthering their own careers and in upholding Dutch forms of justice at all costs than in investing time and resources in facilitating intercultural diplomacy. As the Dutch colonial presence in mid-Atlantic North America expanded during the 1630s, the need for experienced and sophisticated diplomats who could mediate in cross-cultural crises became more pressing.
CHAPTER 3

“TO LEAD A GOOD LIFE IN THIS OUR LAND”: TUPI MEDIATORS AND
THE STRUGGLE FOR INDIAN AUTONOMY IN DUTCH BRAZIL, 1635-1657167

Most recent historians consider the careers of Indian individuals who traveled to Europe to become cross-cultural mediators as tragic but telling examples of the large cultural divide separating Indians and Europeans. While a considerable number of native men and occasionally women were brought to various European countries to receive training as interpreters and intercultural negotiators during the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, many of these native individuals reared in Europe sooner or later failed to live up to the high expectations of either the Indians or Europeans. First of all, many Indians succumbed to Old World diseases while in Europe. Secondly, some native mediators quickly turned against their European sponsors once they arrived back in their American homelands. Thirdly, other indigenous individuals too closely associated with their European hosts and became estranged from their native community, making them useless as intercultural negotiators for both natives and newcomers. Because of increasing conflicts between Indians and Europeans, even those natives who did function

167 For the quotation, see DNA, OWIC, LPB, Inv. No. 61: Dutch Translation of a Letter from Pieter Poty to Camarão, October 31, 1645.
for some time as intercultural mediators were always viewed with suspicion by their 
European employers. Writing about the attempts of French and English colonizers to 
train natives as negotiators, James Axtell concluded, “no Indian -- no matter how fluent, 
able, or experienced -- could ever be fully trusted with the white man’s business.”

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the ordeal of the two young Algonquian 
men from mid-Atlantic North America who had been taken to the Dutch Republic in the 
1610s exemplified the mutual distrust between Native Americans and Europeans. By 
attacking and even killing some of their Dutch sponsors upon returning to North 
America, the two natives, whom the Dutch writer Nicolaes van Wassenaer had labeled 
Valentine and Orson, dramatically showed the potential danger of using Indian 
interpreters in the lower Hudson Valley. Instead of relying on Indian or Dutch mediators, 
the Algonquian communities of coastal New York and New Jersey developed a pidgin 
language to communicate with Dutch traders. By using this simplified trade language in 
interactions with the Dutch, the Algonquians were able to keep the Dutch at an arms’ 
length while still continuing the exchange of animal furs for European goods.

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The pattern of Dutch-Algonquian communication in mid-Atlantic North America strongly supports the argument that the education of natives in Europe widened rather than narrowed the cultural divide between natives and Europeans. However, there were also instances where natives trained in Europe succeeded in becoming prominent mediators between Indians and Europeans for a considerable time. In this chapter I discuss the careers of Pieter Poty and Anthonio Paraupaba from northeastern Brazil to show that Indians educated in Europe could become influential figures in the colonial world. These two particular individuals became important negotiators, whose prominent status was especially demonstrated by their repeated travels to the United Provinces. As the lives of Poty and Paraupaba reveal, some Indian mediators in the Atlantic world attained a cosmopolitan identity.

In explaining why Poty and Paraupaba were able to expand their influence as intercultural mediators, I suggest that Dutch imperial policies as well as frontier conditions in Brazil contributed to their success. Instead of an antagonistic relationship between natives and newcomers in mid-Atlantic North America, Tupi-Dutch relations in Brazil were shaped by mutual dependency. While the Dutch West India Company (WIC) needed the Tupis as a military force and as workers in the colonial economy, many Tupis welcomed the Dutch invaders as highly useful allies in the Tupi struggle against Portuguese colonialism. These mutual needs subsequently facilitated the rise of Poty and Paraupaba as mediators between the Dutch and the Tupis. At the same time, relations between the Tupis and the Dutch were not always amicable. Although Poty and Paraupaba were loyal supporters of the WIC, they never deemed themselves subjects of the Dutch colonial order. Instead, the Tupi mediators primarily viewed the alliance with
the Dutch as an opportunity to promote Indian autonomy from European colonialism. For all their usefulness as skilful and reliable negotiators, Poty and Paraupaba were therefore never fully trusted by Company officials.

1. The Beginnings of the WIC-Tupi Alliance, 1635-1636

Initially Pieter Poty and Anthonio Paraupaba were unable to use their special skills as cross-cultural mediators. After their services as negotiators during the early 1630s, neither Poty nor Paraupaba were called upon by the WIC government in Recife to perform services. While Poty had last been observed in northeastern Brazil in the spring of 1631 as corresponding with the Heeren XIX, the governing body of the WIC in the Republic, Paraupaba had functioned as interpreter and messenger between the Dutch and the Tarairius in Rio Grande do Norte in 1634. However, after these references, their names are not to be found in any Company documents or contemporary sources until 1637. Although this lack of archival records does not necessarily imply that they were not active as negotiators, the absence of their names in any of the surviving voluminous and usually detailed correspondence of Dutch officials in Brazil during these years signifies that Poty’s and Paraupaba’s activities were apparently not deemed important enough to report about to the Company directors in the United Provinces.169

Instead, all available documentary evidence during the late 1630s shows that Poty and Paraupaba were important but not overly influential leaders of some of the aldeias, or

169 The official papers and correspondence regarding the WIC activities in Brazil are relatively well preserved and quite extensive (see the bibliography of my dissertation). In this context it is useful to consider Donna Merwick’s recent argument that the Dutch in general were obsessed with the collecting of information on written documents. See Merwick, Death of a Notary: Conquest and Change in Colonial New York (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), especially chapter 2.
Tupi mission villages in the Dutch-controlled captaincies (provinces) of northeastern Brazil. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the High Council in Recife had, largely thanks to the defection of the Jesuit missionary priest Manuel de Morais in January 1635, inherited the efficient infrastructure of Indian mission villages following the flight of thousands of Portuguese colonists and their African slaves from the captaincies of Pernambuco, Itamaracá, Paraíba, and Rio Grande do Norte in 1635. Many of these aldeias had welcomed the Dutch invaders after the WIC abolished Indian slavery and limited the exploitation of Tupi laborers by Portuguese colonists.

From the perspective of the High Council in Recife, the considerable Tupi population inhabiting the aldeias in Dutch-controlled Brazil was useful for three important purposes. First, like the Portuguese before them, the Dutch considered the Tupis a cheap and readily available labor force for the sugar mills and Brazilwood harvesting that dominated the economy of northeastern Brazil. The second purpose that the aldeias served for the Dutch was as an important supplier of auxiliary troops, guides, and carriers for the WIC army. Because of their widely known animosity towards the Portuguese, many Tupis were highly motivated to fight their former colonial oppressors. In addition, due to their familiarity with the terrain and local geography, the Tupis made excellent guides and scouts for the WIC troops.

The third and final use of the aldeias for the High Council was as an isolated laboratory to civilize the Tupis and convert them to Protestant Christianity. Like the Jesuits before them, the High Council and Dutch Calvinist ministers considered it prudent to concentrate the traditionally mobile Tupi communities in fixed settlements where they could be better taught the ways of European Christian civilization such as monogamous
marriages, baptisms, church services, reading, writing, agriculture, and a limited number of crafts. Ironically, this goal of civilizing the Tupis in their *aldeias* was undermined by the purposes of enlisting the Tupis for economic and military tasks.\textsuperscript{170}

The WIC government in Brazil modified the already established hierarchy of European and Tupi leaders in order to more efficiently implement and supervise the three goals of economic exploitation, military alliance, and civilization. Upon suggestions from the experienced former Jesuit missionary Manuel de Moraes who had defected to the Dutch and with official support from the *Heeren XIX*, the Recife councilors appointed one Gerard Barbier as the first WIC “Director of Brazilians” in early 1635 to supervise and centrally administer the various Tupi villages in the four captaincies under Dutch control. Throughout the Dutch period in northeastern Brazil, this Director of Brazilians was considered by the High Council to be the most senior Company official in charge of Indian affairs. Although this official frequently conferred with local Tupi Indian village leaders or captains about political, military, and economic issues, only the Director and not the *aldeia* captains had direct access to the High Council.\textsuperscript{171}

Below the Director of Brazilians came the European WIC soldiers who had been appointed by the Recife government as *aldeia* leaders during the mid-1630s. By placing these individuals among the various Tupi communities, the WIC army commanders were able to communicate more effectively and make better use of their Tupi allies during field campaigns. Moreover, these European soldiers were also useful as contractors and

\footnotesize\textsuperscript{170} For the Dutch Protestant missionary policy in Brazil in general, see *The Reformed Church*, part three. For Manuel de Moraes, see *Dutch in Brazil*, 267-269.

recruiters of Tupi laborers when nearby sugar planters needed workers. In most cases these liaisons were Dutchmen of low military rank who earned a captain’s salary. Although the records do not reveal any information about how these individuals communicated with the Tupis they were living with, it seems likely that they spoke either some Portuguese or some rudimentary lengua geral, the simplified version of Tupi that had been standardized into a written language by the Jesuits during the late sixteenth century.172

In addition to these European aldeia leaders, each Tupi village had its own indigenous headman who was given the rank of captain by Dutch authorities. While a small group of prominent males representing malocas - longhouses that sheltered extended families - traditionally governed Tupi villages, intertribal warfare and European invaders had stimulated the emergence of prominent war-leaders during the sixteenth century. By subduing other villages and aligning themselves with Portuguese colonizers or French visitors, some charismatic and skilful Tupi war-leaders were able to obtain political power in an unprecedented manner. When the WIC inherited the system of aldeias from the Portuguese, they continued the Portuguese policy of working with those Tupi village leaders who were most loyal to the colonizing power, in this case the Dutch. Significantly, the majority of aldeia leaders encountered by the Dutch carried

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Spanish/Portuguese baptismal names such as Diogo Botero, Domingo Fernandes, Mattheus Monteiro, and Andre de Sousa. While these names alone do not prove that they mastered the Portuguese language fluently, Portuguese Jesuit missionaries had instructed large numbers of Tupis in reading and writing as part of their Catholic education since the late sixteenth century. Many of these Tupi village leaders in the northeast therefore likely communicated in the Portuguese language with a small number of WIC officials who also spoke an Iberian tongue.173

Because of this hierarchical system of the Director of Brazilians, European aldeia officers, and indigenous village leaders, the roles of Poty and Paraupaba as cross-cultural mediators were considerably reduced. As long as the High Council could successfully tap into the sizable Tupi population for military campaigns or labor needs, Poty and Paraupaba were not really needed. Even if Poty and Paraupaba were occasionally asked to use their Dutch language skills to negotiate on behalf of the Director of Brazilians or the Recife government, Dutch officials apparently did not consider this significant enough to mention in their correspondence. Moreover, since Tupi political organization

was traditionally defined on a village level, Poty and Paraupaba had not much influence 
over *aldeias* other than those in which they were residing.\textsuperscript{174}

In other words, both Potiguar leaders were now simply one of a large number of 
prominent Tupi headmen who had allied themselves with the Dutch. It is in this context 
that we encounter Poty and Paraupaba again in the Dutch documents during the late 
1630s, after an absence of several years. From 1637 to 1644 the two Potiguar leaders are 
frequently mentioned in WIC correspondence as military officers leading Tupi units or as 
village leaders contributing Indian workers to the colonial economy. Significantly, 
throughout this period, there is no documentary evidence that either Poty or Paraupaba 
had a special status within the Dutch colonial hierarchy or among the Tupi population.

2. Governor-General Maurits and the Tupi Mediators, 1637-1644

Poty’s and Paraupaba’s unassuming incorporation into both the colonial world 
and Tupi society coincided with the tenure of Johan Maurits who was Governor-General 
in northeastern Brazil from January 1637 to May 1644. The *Heeren XIX* appointed 
Maurits as supreme military commander of the Dutch colonial project in Brazil in the fall 
of 1636 in the expectation that the German-born aristocrat, who had recently made a 
name for himself in the ongoing Dutch war against Habsburg Spain in Europe, would 
onece and for all secure and expand the WIC foothold in Brazil. Moreover, by dispatching 
the learned grandson of a brother of William of Orange to Brazil, the *Heeren XIX* hoped

\textsuperscript{174} For Tupi political leadership, see Monteiro, “Crises and Transformations of Invaded 
Societies,” 984-985.
to capitalize on Maurits’s prestige and charisma to reform the inefficient and corrupt Company government in Recife.175

From the Dutch colonial viewpoint, Poty and Paraupaba seem to have fulfilled their duties as *aldeia* captains with mixed results during the governorship of Maurits in Brazil. While the two Potiguar leaders were positively regarded by Dutch officials for their roles as military commanders of Tupi units who assisted the WIC armies against the Portuguese, Maurits and the High Council were somewhat disappointed in Poty’s and Paraupaba’s functions as providers of Tupis to the colonial economy and as individuals who would contribute to the Christian civilization of their people.

The number of Dutch military campaigns against the Portuguese increased considerably after the arrival of Maurits in Recife in January 1637. The energetic Governor-General initiated several large-scale attacks against the Iberian forces that were desperately holding on to their positions in northeastern Brazil by early 1637. In most of these expeditions the Tupi Indians played a considerable role as military allies and Poty and Paraupaba frequently emerge in the WIC sources as loyal *aldeia* commanders. In addition to serving as an actual fighting force on the battlefield, the Tupi allies were

175 For the appointment of Maurits, see *Dutch in Brazil*, 65-69. Significantly, Maurits’ dominant position as president of the newly formed High and Secret Council (*Hoogen en Secreten Raad*, the successor of the High Council) was secured by giving him two votes in the council. Since the High and Secret Council consisted of Maurits and three other councilors and made decisions based on a majority vote, Maurits only needed the support of one other councilor in order to implement his policies. An insightful discussion of Maurits’ family background and personal education before his appointment as Governor-General in Brazil is given by M.E.H.N. Mout, “The Youth of Johan Maurits and Aristocratic Culture in the Early Seventeenth Century,” in E. van den Boogaart, ed., in collaboration with H.R. Hoetink and P.J.P. Whitehead, *Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen, 1604-1679: A Humanist Prince in Europe and Brazil. Essays on the tercentenary of his death* (The Hague: The Johan Maurits van Nassau Stichting, 1979), 13-38. Reflective of his aristocratic background and patronage of the arts, Maurits took with him to Brazil several scientists and professional artists. For an interesting study of this topic, see R.P. Brienen, “Art and Natural History at a Colonial Court: Albert Eckhout and Georg Marcgraf in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Brazil,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, 2002).
especially useful for the WIC as scouts and mobile shock troops. Because of their knowledge of the terrain in northeastern Brazil as well as the indigenous military tradition of irregular warfare and surprise attacks, the Tupi allies were highly valued by WIC officers as guides and expert guerilla forces. In January 1637 Paraupaba is mentioned as a captain of aldeia soldiers who helped a military unit of the WIC drive Portuguese troops from the captaincy of Itamaracá. In addition, during the summer of the same year Paraupaba is listed as one of five aldeia captains who led several hundred Tupis as a support force for a military operation that most likely involved the conquest of the Portuguese fort Porto Calvo in southern Pernambuco in the spring of 1637.  

Although Paraupaba had already participated in several expeditions during the first half of 1637, Poty is mentioned as an aldeia captain only in the fall of 1637. In the daily minutes of the High Council dated September 29, 1637, Poty, as well as Paraupaba and several other Tupi and Dutch individuals are referred to as leaders of Tupi units from Itamaracá and Paraíba. The Tupi companies that Poty, Paraupaba, and the other captains commanded were numerically significant. While Poty’s unit consisted of 138 men and 40 women, Paraupaba reportedly had the command over 84 men and 21 women. Although the officers were reluctant to allow women on their campaigns, Tupi men insisted upon

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176 On Paraupaba’s activities as aldeia commander in 1637, see the contemporary report by Christopher Arczewsky, “Memoriedoor den Kolonel Artichofsky, bij zijn vertrek uit Brazilië in 1637 overgeleverd aan Graaf Maurits en zijnen geheimen Raad,” Kronijk van het Historisch Genootschap (Gevestigd te Utrecht) 5th series, vol. 25 (1869), No. 5: 253-349, especially 309-310, and DN, Inv. No. 68: July 25, 1637. On the military use of the Tupis see for instance the marching formation plan of the WIC army made by Johan Maurits for a campaign in the spring of 1641, “Forme van Batailie soo zijn Extie. Graeff J. Maurits van Nassau de selve heeft geordonneert, zijnde gereet om op een tocht te senden op den 20 Mei @ 1641 in Brasilie,” in Dutch Royal Family Archive, Archive of Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen, Brazilian Affairs, Inv. No. Α-4-1454, folio 148. On this sketch three Tupi companies are clearly positioned on the head of the army as forces who were the first to engage the enemy.
bringing their women, on whom they relied to prepare food during expeditions. The total number of Tupi men and women assembled nearby Recife amounted to over 400 men and 130 women. Maurits had assembled this large number of Tupi troops in order to have them support Colonel Sigismund von Schoppe’s raid into the captaincy of Sergipe. The Governor-General instructed Von Schoppe, like Maurits a German-born officer in service of the WIC, to pursue roving bands of Portuguese and pro-Portuguese Indians and Africans into the captaincy of Sergipe in November 1637.177

Unfortunately, we don’t have any information about the personal experiences of either Poty or Paraupaba during these expeditions. However, from contemporary sources we can uncover several aspects of Poty’s and Paraupaba’s roles as aldeia captains. While the common Tupi soldiers and women were rewarded in linen and cloth, Maurits and the High Council compensated Poty, Paraupaba, and the other Tupi Captains with more prestigious items. Because of Dutch concerns for hierarchy and order and also in order to strengthen relations with the village leaders, the Recife government frequently rewarded the Tupi captains with goods like hats, shoes, and more expensive European clothing.

Colonial Dutch society in northeastern Brazil, like that in the United Provinces, was differentiated by social status. The selected Tupi adoption of European material culture and Christianity led the Dutch to view the coastal Tupis as being on a higher social level than the non-Christian “Tapuyas” of the interior or the imported African slaves. The Company government consequently treated the Tupi leaders as a social elite like themselves, an elite whose members had to be provided with status symbols that

177 For this campaign, see DN, Inv. No. 68: September 29, 1637. For the campaign of Von Schoppe, see Dutch in Brazil, 85. Most likely Maurits had called upon the services of the Tupis because of their familiarity with waging hit-and-run raids in the sertão or dry hinterlands of northeastern Brazil.
reflected their superior position. As a result, in their position as Tupi Captains, Poty and Paraupaba were regularly given prestigious trade goods. In July 1637, Paraupaba and several other Tupi commanders each not only received a hat, shirt, and a pair of pants, but also a pair of shoes. The last item is especially revealing as a status symbol because shoes were even scarce among European WIC soldiers.

The special council called by Maurits with all the Tupi captains in July 1639 provided yet another example of the Dutch policy of cultivating relations with prominent Tupi men. Being highly status conscious himself, the German nobleman convened an extraordinary meeting with all aldeia leaders in order to solidify the alliance between the Tupis and the WIC. After the Tupi headmen, among whom were almost certainly Poty and Paraupaba, had declared their loyalty to the Dutch, “his Excellency had found it appropriate to honor these same principal men and captains of the Brazilians with a stack of clothes each.”

Similarly, the Recife government also distinguished between the Tupi officers and rank-and-file Tupi soldiers when compensating them with money. For instance, on February 6, 1639, Maurits and the High Council compensated Poty together with Captains Pantalliou Correa and Andre de Sousa and their respective companies for

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having served on the campaign of Admiral Cornelis Willemsen for two months. While Poty and his fellow captains were paid 30 guilders per month, the common soldiers received only 4 guilders per month. Later documented sources even show that the High Council used a standardized graduated salary scale for Tupi officers distinguishing between Captain, Lieutenant, Ensign, and Sergeant.

While this policy shows that the Dutch rewarded the Tupi allies in the same manner as they paid the European officers and soldiers in WIC service, Dutch authorities always compensated the Tupis with less money than their military personnel from Europe. In most cases, the Tupi officers and soldiers earned about half of what their European counterparts got. Although the Tupis were important allies for the Dutch, the WIC authorities considered the Tupis to be not worthy of receiving the same salary as their European equivalents. While indispensable as military allies, the Dutch officials could not bring themselves to treat the Tupis as equal to Europeans. After all, doing so would have endangered the whole colonial project of exploiting overseas territories and its peoples for the benefit of the Company and the United Provinces. In addition, whereas the Tupis showed some interest in Calvinism, their continuation of traditional rituals and dances, as well as expressions of Catholicism in the form of crucifixes and rosaries, led the Dutch to conclude that the Tupis were not yet orthodox Protestants.\footnote{On the payment to Poty, see DN, Inv. No. 68: February 6, 1639. Most likely Poty and the other two Captains were involved here in the defense of Dutch Brazil in the face of an impending invasion of a large Iberian fleet. On this fleet, see Dutch in Brazil, 89-93. On the graduated salary list to Tupi officers, see DN, Inv. No. 69: February 20, 1642. This entry concerns a proposed payment to be made to three Tupi companies who had served a WIC campaign that had conquered the Portuguese possessions in Luanda, Angola and the island of Sao Thome in the fall of 1641. For the assertion that the payment to the Tupis was half of that of the European military, see Ernst van den Boogart, “De Nederlandse expansie in het Atlantische gebied, 1590-1674,” in E. van den Boogart and M.A.P. Meilink Roelofsz, eds., Overzee: Nederlandse koloniale geschiedenis, 1590-1975 (Haarlem: Fibula-Van Dishoeck, 1982), 125. See}
It is not known what impact the colonial policy of favoring *aldeia* captains such as Poty and Paraupaba had upon their standing as village leaders. Most likely however, the *aldeia* captains were highly regarded by their kinsmen for showing their military skills and prowess. Because warfare was such a central component of Tupi culture, those individuals who proved themselves on the battlefield as warriors or campaign leaders traditionally rose to the position of village headman. At the same time, by functioning as the mediators between the Dutch authorities and the Tups, captains like Poty and Paraupaba were probably seen by their kinsmen as influential individuals who succeeded in providing the community with desirable trade goods and monetary rewards. As spokesmen for their people who had direct access to the Dutch colonial leadership, Tupi leaders such as Poty and Paraupaba could therefore consolidate and probably increase their political position in the *aldeias*.\(^{180}\)

The rising status of the Tupi captains can also be seen in their role as providers of workers to the colonial economy and as collaborators in the Dutch civilization program. Although the Recife government expected that the Tupi headmen whom they had carefully nurtured as loyal *aldeia* captains by way of providing them with prestigious titles and presents would be helpful in cooperating with the colonial system, many Tupi leaders instead used their privileged position to increase their status as prominent community leaders. For instance, several Tupi captains insisted on receiving the wages

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\(^{180}\) For a discussion of the roles of Tupi village leaders, see Métraux, “Tupinamba,” 113-114; Monteiro, “The Crises and Transformations of Invaded Societies,” 984-985; and Carneiro, “What happened at the Flashpoint?”.
for their kinsmen before hiring them out to colonists. Elias Herckmans, a prominent WIC official in the captaincy of Paraíba, angrily reported in September 1640 how the European officers of the Tupi villages had to pay “the wages for the Brazilians to the Captains or spokesmen for the Brazilians, and one frequently pays them for five [Tupi laborers] but one only gets three or four, and even those desert from their work before even half of their contract period has expired.”

While Herckmans does not mention the names of these Tupi leaders, it is very likely that he was talking about Pieter Poty because the latter is listed as one of the five captains of the Paraíba aldeias in a detailed report made in 1639 by the Recife councilor Adriaen van der Dussen. Moreover, in August 1639, the Portuguese colonist Duarte Gomes complained to Maurits and the High Council that Poty was not forthcoming in supplying Tupi workers. Gomes, who was presumably the owner of an engenho or sugar mill, informed the Recife authorities in blunt terms “Pieter potij Capt. of the Brazilians is not capable of government.” In order to avoid this problem in the future, Maurits and the High Council resolved that they would order Colonel Doncker, the newly appointed Director of Brazilians, to “look for any adequate persons who could be assigned as captains to the aldeias in addition to [P]otti because [D]uarte [G]uomes and his labradores prefer other ones.”

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181 For Herckmans, see DNA, OWIC, LPB: Inv. No. 55: Missive and Journal of Elias Herckmans, September 8, 1640.

182 For Van der Dussen, see his “Rapport van de Geconquesteerde Landen in Brasil,” folios 61-63. For these two incidents, see DN, Inv. No. 68: August 23, 1639. Also, in February 1641, the Recife authorities instructed the schout or Dutch law enforcement officer of the captaincy of Rio Grande to make sure that Poty would adequately distribute the money that was given to him as contractor for twenty-five Tupi workers. See DN, Inv. No. 69: February 6, 1641.
Because of incidents like this, WIC officials and later historians have argued that individuals like Poty and other Tupi captains were more interested in their own wealth than in the welfare of their kinsmen. While the Dutch documents do indeed suggest that prominent Tupi men could have enriched themselves, it can also be argued that the Tupi leaders distributed a large portion of their material and financial rewards among their people. Since generosity was an important social value in traditional Tupi culture, refusing to share prestigious European goods could result in a decline of one’s political standing in the community. It is therefore more logical to explain the “selfish” behavior of Tupi captains as a reflection of their goal to strengthen their status as political leaders. By mediating access to European trade goods, a Tupi captain could show his success as a leader, and his generosity indicated his worthiness of leadership. Moreover, because Tupi men and women preferred working on their own fields and crops to working under harsh conditions for the colonists, the Tupi communities supported the actions of leaders who kept the Dutch colonial government at arms’ length.183

In addition to the Tupi captains’ sabotaging of WIC efforts to recruit Tupi laborers, the Recife government had also become greatly annoyed by the Tupi consumption of alcohol. In contrast to the native peoples of North America, the Tupis were accustomed to drinking their own alcoholic beverages made from fermented manioc juice or from distilled fruits of the regional caju tree. At the same time, the Tupis also

drank imported European alcohol because it was available in cheaper and larger quantities than their own distilled beverages and perhaps it was also a new “fashionable” product. While it is possible that the Tupis increasingly consumed alcohol for reasons of cultural stress or addiction, Tupi leaders and their kinsmen traditionally consumed alcohol for communal and religious purposes such as seasonal manioc beer festivals. However, Maurits and the High Council attempted to prohibit the consumption of alcohol by the Tupis because the Indian drinking habits made them unfit from the Company’s point of view for military or labor services and it also undermined the Dutch civilization program.¹⁸⁴

In a special meeting with the Recife government in February 1642, Johannes Listry or Listry, the newly appointed Director of Brazilians, concluded that the aldeia captains had failed in their tasks of keeping order in their villages. Listry stated that “among our Brazilian officers in the aldeias are occurring daily great disorder and errors, because they have in common with their people to do nothing on a daily basis except to produce and consume strong drinks, and as a result they have no leadership skills and neither can they discipline their people.” Fearing that the “weak” leadership skills of the Tupi captains contributed to the Tupis being disorderly and unwilling to work for colonists, the Recife government in August 1642 consequently scaled back the influence

¹⁸⁴ For the Tupi consumption and production of alcoholic drinks made from caju fruits, see the personal observations of Zacharias Wagener, a German-born WIC official who held a special sketch and notebook during his tenure in Brazil. See Dante Martins Teixeira, eds. “The 'Thierbuch' and 'Autobiography' of Zacharias Wagener,” in Christina Ferrão, ed. Dutch Brazil: Volume II (Rio de Janeiro: Editoria Index, 1997), 102-103. For 20th century Tupi methods of producing maize beer and the cultural importance of consuming it, see Castro, From the Enemy’s Point of View, 119-128. For alcohol consumption among Indians in colonial North America, see Peter C. Mancall, Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).
of the Tupi captains and instead gave more authority to the European aldeia commanders, even though the latter had frequently been found guilty of corruptness themselves.\(^{185}\)

Listry specifically mentioned Pieter Poty as a chronic drunkard “because he seldom or almost never is sober.” Upon hearing the complaints of Listry, Maurits and the High Council instructed “the Commander to order Captain Pieter Pottij to appear before his Excellency [Maurits] and the High and Secret Council as soon as possible.” Eventually on March 25 1642 Poty arrived in Recife for his meeting with Maurits and the other officials. Probably communicating with him in the Dutch language that Poty had learned while in the United Provinces, the Dutch authorities “told him, that we clearly understood that he misbehaves himself through his drunkenness, and by frequently misbehaving with the Brazilians under his leadership, we would deport him, unless he from now on would behave himself better, and serve us better in his position.” Although Poty’s words himself are not documented, the Daily Minutes mention that Poty “promised to behave himself in such a way that the Council would not encounter any more problems with him.”\(^{186}\)

But in early August 1642 Poty again was the subject of criticism by Dutch colonial officials. In a somewhat vague notice written on August 2, the Recife government refers to complaints made by Thomas Kemp, a Dutch Reformed minister in the aldeia “Masariba” in Paraíba, about the “improper conduct of the Capt. Pieter Pottij.”

\(^{185}\) For this special meeting, see DN, Inv. No. 69: February 17, 1642. For the later meeting in August, see DN, Inv. No. 69: August 28, 1642. For corrupt European aldeia officers, see Van den Boogaart, “De Nederlandse expansie in het Atlantische gebied,” 124. For specific cases, see for instance, OWIC, DN, Inv. No. 68: October 12 and November 6, 1638.

\(^{186}\) For Listry’s criticism of Poty, see DN, Inv. No. 69: February 17, 1642. For the March meeting, see DN, Inv. No. 69: March 25, 1642. Reformed Church, 210, argues that Poty’s drinking was caused by “transcultural problems”. However, Schalkwijk does not take into consideration that the Tupis traditionally consumed alcohol for communal purposes.
Unfortunately, there are no other sources that discuss in more details the “improper conduct” of Poty. However, from other Dutch criticism of Tupi behavior in this period, it can be suggested that Poty perpetuated communal Tupi practices such as the consumption of manioc beer or European alcohol. In addition, Calvinist ministers preaching in aldeias during the early 1640s frequently complained about the continuation of Tupi dances and body painting. While there is no definite documentary evidence, it is possible that Kemp criticized Poty for adorning his body and for participating in traditional dances. In any case, irritated by Poty’s recurring misbehavior, Maurits and the High Council subsequently called on Listry to visit Poty in person in Paraíba. It is not known whether Listrij visited Poty, but the Dutch authorities in Recife must have been clearly disappointed that one of their most promising converts to Dutch civilization and Calvinism in Brazil was causing continuing problems.187

However, Maurits and the High Council apparently concluded that the Potiguar captain should remain in his position as aldeia leader because Poty was still listed as the captain of the aldeia “Magaribe” in Paraíba in late August 1642. In this context it is significant to notice that the Recife government did not necessarily refrain from exacting harsh measures against Tupi captains who were deemed uncooperative. For instance, in August 1639, Maurits and the High Council deported the earlier mentioned “Pantalion

187 DN, Inv. No. 69: August 2, 1642. For complaints from Reformed ministers regarding Tupi dances and body painting, see DN, Inv. No. 70: September 20, 1644. See also the pamphlet letter written by the Calvinist minister Vincent Joachim Soler, Corte ende Sonderlingh Verhael van eenen Brief van Monsieur Soler (Amsterdam, 1639), 5. For an English translation of this pamphlet, see Vicente Joachim Soler, “Brief and Curious Report of Some Peculiarities of Brazil,” translated by B.N. Teensma, in: Christina Ferrão, et al, eds., Dutch Brazil, Volume 1: Documents in the Leiden University Library (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Index, 1997): 38-48. Soler considered drinking and dancing the greatest vices of the Tupis. For the importance of body adornment and dances among the Tupis, see Castro, From the Enemy’s Point of View, 39-40, 68-70, 123-125.
Correa, Captain of the *aldeia* Itapiserica,” because “he was always unfriendly towards our State, and was also an obstinate papist.” While the WIC officials seem to have initially intended to deport Correia to either New Netherland or Fort Elmina in West Africa, another contemporary source indicates that Correia was “thrown into the sea” on personal orders of Maurits and the High Council.188

Most likely, the WIC government in Recife refrained from punishing Poty as severely as Correia because of the former’s special status. The *Heeren XIX* in the Republic still considered Poty and Paraupaba important individuals in which they had invested many resources as part of the Dutch attempt to establish a strong anti-Iberian alliance with the Tupis. Even though they increasingly distrusted him, Poty’s ability to speak and write Dutch clearly made him indispensable for the Dutch. As we have seen, during the early 1630s the *Heeren XIX* frequently reminded Company officials in Brazil to utilize Poty and Paraupaba as model-converts and prominent Tupi leaders who would draw the Indian peoples closer to the Dutch and to Protestant Christianity. While the Recife authorities became more and more suspicious of Tupi leaders like Poty, the *Heeren XIX*, far removed from the actual situation in Brazil, continued to think highly of Poty and Paraupaba as useful mediators and promoters of Tupi Protestantism.189

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189 For the attitude of the *Heeren XIX* toward Poty and Paraupaba in the early 1630s, see chapter 2 of the dissertation and also *Reformed Church*, 169.
Maurits and the High Council were probably also afraid to openly punish Poty after having received heavy criticism relating to Indian affairs from the *Heeren XIX* in the spring of 1642. During the early 1640s a wave of epidemics had hit the inhabitants of northeastern Brazil, killing large numbers of Tupis and African slaves. Although the exact origins of the epidemics are unknown, most likely recently imported slaves from Angola had inadvertently introduced smallpox. Because of the epidemic, many *aldeias* became depopulated, not only by killing off many Tupis but also by spreading panic among Indian families. Reporting to the High Council about the impact of the disease upon the Tupis in February 1642, Listry reported, “out of fear for the same smallpox many of them remain outside of the *aldeias*.” In addition to deadly diseases imported to Brazil, more than 140 out of a contingent of some 250 Tupis died of malaria at the West African island of São Thomé after having accompanied a WIC fleet in the conquest of Portuguese Angola and São Thomé in the fall of 1641. Upon return of the small number of Tupi survivors in the Recife harbor in January 1642, unnamed Tupi spokesmen -- who could have been Poty or Paraupaba -- bluntly told the Recife government that they were convinced that the Dutch apparently “had no other plans for the Tupis than have them being killed in wars in strange lands.”¹⁹⁰

Upon being informed of the heavy losses recently suffered by the Tupis in Brazil and in the Atlantic, the *Heeren XIX* angrily wrote to Recife in April 1642 urging the High

Council to refrain from employing the Tupis too often in military campaigns. Irritated by the High Council’s careless exploitation of the Tupis, the Heeren XIX wrote, “we have Your Excellency and Your Highnesses in the past repeatedly told not to use this Nation in military campaigns except in emergency situations.” Instead of using the Tupis as a military force, the Heeren XIX first and foremost wanted to promote agriculture, literacy, and instruction in Protestant Christianity among the aldeia inhabitants. Realizing that the support of the Tupis was of “very great concern” for the WIC, the Heeren XIX went on to criticize Maurits and the High Council in a rare show of piety for only having an eye for “short term profits” at the expense of the “Salvation of the Poor People”. Although this criticism from the Heeren XIX did not concern Poty directly, in the face of these protests from their superiors regarding Indian policy Maurits and the High Council would have likely refrained from heavily disciplining prominent Tupi leaders such as Poty.191

3. Tupi Mediators and the Quest for Indian Autonomy, 1644-1645

At the same time as the Heeren XIX criticized Maurits and the High Council for exploiting the Tupis too harshly, Poty and Paraupaba initiated a plan to travel to the United Provinces to speak to the Heeren XIX directly. Because of the increasing exploitation of the Tupi population and because of their own marginalization by the WIC government in Recife during the late 1630s and early 1640s, Poty and Paraupaba rightly concluded that the best way to secure both Tupi autonomy and their own influential status was by contacting the superior Heeren XIX. Since they had met several high WIC officials during their extensive stay in the Republic from 1625 to 1630, Poty and

191 For this letter, see OWIC, Inv. No. 9: Copybook of Letters sent by the Heeren XIX to the WIC Government in Brazil, 1642-1647: April 18, 1642.
Paraupaba likely knew that the High Council was subservient to the *Heeren XIX*. Traveling to the United Provinces would therefore give Poty and Paraupaba an opportunity to meet in person with the *Heeren XIX* and persuade the latter to give them more influence and authority in Brazil.

Although Poty and Paraupaba obviously lacked the means to independently make the Atlantic crossing, they found an excellent excuse to go to the United Provinces after they received news from Dutch officials in the fall of 1643 that Maurits was recalled to Europe. Although it is not necessary to discuss Maurits’ resignation here in full detail, it is noteworthy to mention that this recall followed several earlier attempts by Maurits to resign following conflicts between him and the *Heeren XIX* concerning WIC policies in Brazil. While Maurits emphasized the need for a large standing army to protect the recently conquered provinces, the *Heeren XIX* ordered a strong reduction of troops in order to save money following the conclusion of a truce between the Dutch and Portuguese in Brazil in July 1642. Moreover, the *Heeren XIX* had always criticized Maurits for his expensive aristocratic lifestyle in Brazil that included one palace, two country-houses, a zoo containing South American and West African animals, a tropical garden, and a large court following of artists, scientists, servants, and slaves.292

192 For the resignation of Maurits, see for instance *Dutch in Brazil*, 156. For his expensive lifestyle in Brazil, see *Dutch in Brazil*, 115-116, 150-155. For his extensive court, see LPB, Inv. No. 58: List of Personnel of Count Johan Maurits of Nassau in Dutch Brazil, April 1, 1643. For some of the American and African animals in Maurits’ zoological garden, see for instance the contemporary paintings of various animals reproduced in P.J.P. Whitehead and F.J. Duparc, Jr. “Theatrum Rerum Naturalium Brasiliæ,” in Ernst van den Boogaart and F.J. Duparc, eds. *Zo wijd de wereld strekt* (The Hague: Mauritshuis, 1979): 270-286. See also Brienen, “Art and Natural History at a Colonial Court.” In addition to being suspicious of his extravagant expenses in Brazil, the *Heeren XIX* were also concerned about the impressive new home that Maurits had build for himself in the center of The Hague during the late 1630s and early 1640s. Because this luxurious neo-classicist building was largely financed by money that Maurits had earned during his tenure in Brazil, the *Heeren XIX* mockingly referred to it as the “sugarhouse”. For this see
In any case, after they were notified of Maurits’ impending departure, Poty, Paraupaba, and perhaps also other Tupi leaders who felt increasingly left out by the High Council resolved to send a delegation of their people to accompany Maurits back to Holland. Ironically, WIC officials in Recife actively supported the travel of a considerable delegation of Indian envoys to the Republic. According to Caspar Barlaeus, a close friend of Maurits who wrote a reliable account of Maurits’ tenure in Brazil using the Governor-General’s personal correspondence, the Dutch were very much concerned to strengthen the alliance with the Tupis and other Indian peoples in Brazil. Barlaeus noted that WIC officials in Brazil were especially anxious about recent Portuguese propaganda aimed at the Tupis that discredited the Dutch “as if we were virtually impoverished dens of robbers who only kept themselves out of poverty with the help of fishing vessels.” Although the Portuguese propaganda was of course deliberately exaggerated, the dramatic depopulation of the Tupis in the early 1640s following the smallpox epidemic and the disastrous Tupi participation in the WIC expedition against Portuguese West Africa must have made the Recife officials rightly worried that their native allies would defect to the Portuguese. In order to counter Portuguese propaganda and impress the Tupis and other Indian peoples with Dutch naval and military power, the High Council was therefore more than happy to send Tupi envoys and other Indian emissaries to the United Provinces along with Maurits.193

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Evelyn de Regt, Mauritshuis: De geschiedenis van een Haags stads paleis (The Hague: SDU, 1987), 21. See also Dutch in Brazil, 113.

193 For Barlaeus, see Caspar Barlaeus, Nederlandsch Brazilië onder het bewind van Johan Maurits, Grave van Nassau, 1637-1644 Translated from the original Latin edition of 1647 and edited by S.P. L'Honore Naber (The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1923), 395-398. Barlaeus based his account fully on Maurits’ personal correspondence as well as WIC papers when writing the history of Maurits’ tenure in Brazil. Although Barlaeus is considered a very reliable source, his
As a result, upon the departure of Maurits from Brazil on May 10, 1644 “the Brazilian people dispatched five from their own who would travel at the same time, in order to see the Netherlands and the Prince of Orange, (whose name means everything only to them), and to relate to their kinsmen the state of our country and customs.” Except for Paraupaba, we don’t know the identities of the four other envoys. However, since Poty also spoke Dutch and had visited the Low Countries before, it would make sense that he volunteered to go with Maurits as well. In addition to the five Tupi envoys, two Tarairius and four “Carapeta” and “Waybepa” Indians from the hinterlands of coastal Brazil also accompanied Maurits to Europe. Reflecting the importance of the Tarairiu mission, the two Indian travelers were not ordinary kinsmen but instead were two of the sons of Nhanduí, the most prominent leader of the Tarairius. Like the Tarairius, the Tupis probably also selected prominent individuals such as Paraupaba to emphasize the significance of the Tupi visit to the Heeren XIX.  

Although the High Council was supportive of sending this large Indian delegation to the Republic, the Recife officials were at the same time suspicious of the actual diplomatic intents of Paraupaba and the other Tupi envoys. In a missive addressed to the Heeren XIX and sent along with the same fleet that carried Paraupaba and Maurits to the

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194 For the quotation and the other Indian envoys who accompanied Maurits to the Low Countries, see Barlaeus, Nederlandsch Brazilië, 395-398. For documentary evidence that Paraupaba was part of the Tupi team that went to Holland, see LPB: Inv. No. 60: General Missive from the High Council to the Heeren XIX, June 27, 1645.
Republic, the High Council warned its superiors about the lack of civilization displayed by Poty and Paraupaba. Reporting on the lack of Christian and cultural progress shown by the two Tupi mediators, the High Council told the Heeren XIX “one indeed concludes that Pieter Potti and Antonio Paripaba, whose education in the fatherland was so expensive for the WIC, live in as savage and wicked manner as the other Brazilians.” While this observation was part a general statement of disillusion about the lack of progress among the Tupis to fully adopt European civilization, the timing of this strong remark is significant. By issuing such a strong warning about Poty and Paraupaba, the WIC government in Brazil probably intended to prevent the Tupi envoys from obtaining too supportive an audience with the Heeren XIX.195

As with the earlier visit of Poty and Paraupaba to the Dutch Republic during the 1620s, there are hardly any contemporary sources available that discuss the ordeal of the five Tupi envoys after they arrived in the United Provinces with Maurits in August 1644. Although there is a curious reference to several Brazilian Indians performing a “war dance” in Maurits’ residence in The Hague in September 1644, the five Tupis were most likely not involved in this staging of an “exotic” performance in front of an audience of elite Dutchmen. Most likely, the Indians who performed the dance were the two Tarairius and the four other Indian envoys who had accompanied Maurits back to Europe, from the hinterlands of coastal Brazil. The Dutch considered the Tarairius and the other native

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195 LPB, Inv. No. 59: Missive from the High Council in Recife to the Heeren XIX, May 10, 1644. On the construction of these long official letters sent to the Heeren XIX, see Gonsalves de Mello, Nederlanders in Brazilië, 20, note 6.
diplomats as prototypical wild men who had not yet adopted Christianity and European civilization.\(^{196}\)

Instead of representing themselves as exotic savages, the five Tupi diplomats succeeded in getting access to the *Heeren XIX* in Amsterdam in late November 1644. Although the particular minutes of this meeting have not survived, there is a contemporary account of this council that was documented by the permanent States-General representative to the *Heeren XIX*. This unique source clearly shows that Paraupaba and the other envoys accomplished their goals of obtaining support from the *Heeren XIX*. At the beginning of the meeting the Tupi negotiators sounded all the right notes with the WIC executives. First of all, the Tupis declared their continuing loyalty to the Dutch, and the *Heeren XIX* were duly satisfied with “the good services of the aforesaid nation accomplished against the Portuguese and other enemies.” In addition, the *Heeren XIX*, afraid of alienating the Tupis over the issue of labor services, once more reiterated to the Tupi envoys that “the Brazilians by our [Dutch] nation and its subjects would be held and treated as free subjects and that all slaves of the same nation will be set free and released from slavery and placed in their natural freedom.” Since the States-

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General had issued the charter of the WIC, the Brazilian Indians were considered subjects of the States-General.\textsuperscript{197}

Although the Tupi negotiators certainly welcomed this declaration, they were more interested in their primary objective of securing more autonomy for the aldeia leaders. It is not certain how the Tupi envoys went about accomplishing this goal, but at the end of the meeting the unnamed WIC executive who was present at the council in Amsterdam noted that

the aforementioned Brazilians request the privilege to appoint and nominate from among their own nation judges and governors, just as is the case with other judicial courts, and [these are to] be selected by the High Council, to the satisfaction of them [the High Council], who will protect them [the Tupis] at all times against the evil designs of the Portuguese; and these judges and governors will be treated similarly to other judicial courts and will swear an oath of loyalty and execute all that the aforementioned High Council will demand.\textsuperscript{198}

This somewhat unusual demand of Paraupaba and the other Tupis clearly shows how skilled they were in exploiting the differences of opinion between the High Council and the Heeren XIX regarding the WIC policy toward the Tupis. While the High Council in Recife had increasingly become critical of the Tupis and their aldeia captains by the early 1640s, the Heeren XIX in the United Provinces remained committed to the ideal of civilizing the Brazilians as sedentary Protestant Christians. By framing their request for more autonomy in a way that would not upset the colonial hierarchy and that was modeled after Dutch legal institutions, the Tupi negotiators requested a system of self-rule in which they not only governed themselves but also were able to set up their own

\textsuperscript{197} For this document, see DNA, Archive of the States-General, Liassen WIC, Inv. No. 5757, II: D-941-942: Copy of the Letter of Freedom for the Brazilians, November 24, 1644.

\textsuperscript{198} Copy of the Letter of Freedom.
judicial courts similar to the district courts the High Council had implemented in Brazil for European colonists. The Heeren XIX subsequently interpreted the Indian’s request as a reflection of the Tupi willingness to model their governmental and judicial structure after that of the Dutch. Intrigued and perhaps encouraged by the Tupi eagerness to adopt Dutch institutions, the Heeren XIX granted the Indian’s request for self-government, as long as “the aforementioned nation in their usual diligence and ardor will let themselves loyally be used against our and their enemies, and will remain obeying and subject to our laws and ordinances.”

Having accomplished their goals, the Tupi envoys returned to their homelands sometime in March 1645. Upon the Indians’ arrival in Brazil it quickly became clear how the views of Paraupaba and his envoys diverged from those of the WIC authorities concerning Tupi self-rule. While the High Council and also the Heeren XIX considered the Tupis’ request as an encouraging step toward the Indian integration into hierarchical colonial society, Paraupaba viewed the concession he had gotten from the WIC officials in Amsterdam as a step toward fuller Tupi independence. In an official missive to the Heeren XIX, a surprised High Council reported that “Antonio Parupaba, who has arrived with the ship ‘Amsterdam’, proclaimed that it was Your Excellencies’ intention that no Dutchman would evermore command over them, and he argued to have had these promises from Your Excellencies, and that they themselves would choose one from among their nation who would rule over them.” The irritated High Council did not find any of Paraupaba’s bold proclamations in the letter regarding Tupi policy that they had recently received from the Heeren XIX, and they considered it preposterous and

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199 For the quotation, see Copy of the Letter of Freedom.
“undesirable” to give one of the Tupi leaders “the title of king.” Similarly, upon being informed by the High Council of Paraupaba’s suggestion, the Heeren XIX quickly replied to the Recife councilors “we did not at all authorize them to do this.”

It is not entirely clear why Paraupaba wanted to become supreme leader or “king” of all the Tupis. However, his attempt to become the centralized ruler of all the Tupis should not necessarily be seen as a self-centered strategy to increase his power at the expense of his fellow kinsmen. While motivations of individual gain in the form of a personal relationship with the WIC authorities and access to valuable European goods certainly were a factor, Paraupaba at the same time might have attempted to use his position as central ruler to protect the Tupi community against European exploitation. Significantly, these two motives do not necessarily contradict each other. Paraupaba could gain both personal enrichment and prestige, and, simultaneously, increase his status among his own people by furthering the goals of Tupi autonomy from the Dutch.

In any case, Paraupaba’s surprisingly bold attempt to challenge so openly the Recife authorities and the Heeren XIX suggests how confident he felt as an intercultural negotiator who was familiar with the intricacies of the Dutch colonial empire. Having traveled to the United Provinces two times, he had obtained at least some fluency in the Dutch language and a keen understanding of the complicated governmental structure of the WIC. His personal acquaintance with the sovereign Heeren XIX in the Dutch Republic led him to believe, perhaps naively, that he could play off the Heeren XIX

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200 For Paraupaba’s claim and the response of the High Council, see LPB, Inv. No. 60: General Missive from the High Council to the Heeren XIX, June 27, 1645. A similar claim by the Tupis to select one central Indian leader is also mentioned by the High Council in LPB, Inv. No. 60: General Missive from the High Council to the Heeren XIX, March 24, 1645. For the response of the Heeren XIX, see OWIC, Letters from the Heeren XIX, Inv. No. 9: July 6, 1645.
against the High Council. Although his provocative plan to be “king” was quickly rejected, Paraupaba’s attempt clearly shows that indigenous leaders actively exploited their access to the metropolitan center of European colonial powers for their own benefit as well as the well-being of their kinsmen.

After they had quickly turned down Paraupaba’s suggestion, the High Council wrote to the *Heeren XIX* that they would instead proceed with the implementation of the system of indirect rule. Instead of one “Indian king,” the WIC authorities implemented a system of three Tupi *regidors* or civic magistrates who would have to confer with the Director of Brazilians before taking any decisions. In order to execute this policy, the Recife councilors ordered Johannes Listry, the Director of Brazilians, to convene a council with all those Tupis who wished to be appointed as representatives in the new judicial and governmental structure. This meeting was held in the “Tapisseria” *aldeia* located in the region of Gojana north of Recife sometime in late March and early April. During this summit, a group of twenty prominent Tupi leaders, among who were Poty and Paraupaba, worked with Listry on the details regarding the selection and appointment of Tupi magistrates.201

This system of indirect rule over the *aldeia* Indians was heavily modeled after existing Dutch and Iberian colonial bureaucratic and judicial institutions. As we have seen, the Dutch concentration of the Tupis in *aldeias* was copied from the Portuguese. In the new system of indirect rule all the *aldeias* under Dutch control were now divided up over three districts. A board of *schepenen* governed each Indian district. The position of

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201 For this meeting, see DN, Inv. No. 70: April 11, 1645. While the High Council approved the appointment of the Tupi candidates in Recife on April 11 and 12, Listry and the Tupi candidates had discussed all the details during their meeting in the *aldeia* in Gojana between March 30 and April 3.
*schepenen* was of Dutch origin and roughly translated as civic magistrates. The candidates for *schepenen* were nominated by the Tupis themselves but were ultimately appointed by the High Council. Finally, each board of Indian *schepenen* was presided over by a *regidor*. The term *regidor* was directly taken from the Spanish bureaucratic system in South America. Throughout Spanish Peru, *regidors* were Indian administrators who functioned as indispensable intermediaries between Spanish colonial officials and the “republic of Indians.” In Dutch Brazil, the *regidors* fulfilled a similar function for the Recife government. The three *regidors* were the most senior Indian magistrates who dealt directly with Listry and other Dutch colonial officials.\(^202\)

Poty and Paraupaba were two of the three candidates that the Tupis selected for the positions of *regidors*. While Poty was listed as candidate for the district of Paraíba, Paraupaba was nominated for the district of Rio Grande. The third candidate was Domingo Fernandes Carapeba, a distinguished military Tupi leader who represented the *aldeias* located in the jurisdictions of Gojana and Itamaracá. Poty’s and Paraupaba’s status as leaders strongly suggest that their talents as cross-cultural negotiators familiar with the Dutch language and authorities had made them useful and influential in the eyes of their kinsmen. By nominating the Dutch-speaking Poty and Paraupaba for these important positions, the Tupis signified that they wished to have *regidors* who had experience interacting with the Dutch colonial government.\(^203\)


\(^{203}\) See DN: Inv. No. 70: April 11, 1645. Teensma mistakenly believes that Carapeba is the same as Antonio Paraupaba. See Teensma’s note in Mello, *Nederlanders in Brazilië*, 176, note 111. As we will see, they were clearly two separate individuals. Unfortunately, it is not
Since the candidates nominated by the Tupis had to be approved by the High Council, the Recife councilors reserved the right to turn down Poty and Paraupaba. Because of Paraupaba’s recent challenge and Poty’s earlier behavior, the High Recife councilors had good reasons to avoid placing the two Potiguars in the influential position as regidors. Despite these reasons, they did so place them; at the special council held in Recife from April 10 through 13, 1645, the High Council formally recognized the appointment of both Poty and Paraupaba. Why would the Recife councilors have supported the nomination of these two men in the face of the latter’s recent conflicts with the WIC? Ironically, because of their unique familiarity with both the Dutch language and the WIC organization, Poty and Paraupaba remained probably two of the very few Tupi leaders with whom the High Council could efficiently communicate. In addition, realizing that marginalizing Poty or Paraupaba would upset the Heeren XIX, the Recife officials may have sought to avoid a reprimand. Finally, by assigning them to positions that brought the two Potiguar leaders in frequent contact with the High Council, the Recife officials could firmly control the two leaders more firmly.204

Still, even as they sanctioned the appointments of Poty and Paraupaba, the Recife officials made it clear that they did not fully trust either of the two men. During the special council held in Recife from April 10 through 13, the High Council had the Tupi leaders swear an oath of loyalty to the WIC in return for which they would receive a

known whether Carapeba spoke Dutch, but since the two other regidors spoke Dutch, it is possible that Carapeba was at least somewhat familiar with the language as well.

204 DN, Inv. No. 70: April 12, 1645. Significantly, during their meeting with the High Council in which they were confirmed in their nomination as regidors, the High Council provided the Tupi leaders with cloths and money. Perhaps by impressing them with prestigious goods the High Council also hoped to keep tighter control over Poty and Paraupaba.
sealed “Letter of Freedom for the Brazilians,” signed by the Heeren XIX, that outlined the new rights and duties of the Tupis. But instead of issuing one letter each to the three Tupi regidors, the High Council handed out only one sealed letter. Neglecting Poty and Paraupaba, the Recife officials provided Domingo Fernandes Carapeba with the “Letter of Freedom for the Brazilians” and specifically instructed him to take good care of it.  

4. The Challenge of the Portuguese Revolt, 1645-1654

Despite its slighting of the two Tupi leaders, the High Council called upon Poty and Paraupaba when Portuguese colonists violently rebelled against the WIC in the early summer of 1645. Popular Portuguese discontent with the Dutch invaders had long been simmering in northeastern Brazil, but in May 1645 an open revolt broke out that thoroughly exposed the structural weaknesses of the Dutch occupation. The WIC had never fully succeeded in incorporating the thousands of Portuguese colonists who had opted to stay behind in Dutch-controlled territory after the collapse of Iberian resistance in the 1630s. Although prominent Portuguese colonists had taken oaths of loyalty to the WIC and Dutch officials allowed Catholics to exercise their religion openly, most of the Catholic Portuguese continued to perceive the Dutch as Protestant heretics who had invaded their colony and who provided the sizable Jewish community with religious freedom.  

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205 For the issuing of the “Letter of Freedom” to Carapeba, see DN, Inv. No. 70: April 12, 1645.

206 The relationship among Catholic Portuguese colonists, Iberian Jews, and the Protestant Dutch in Brazil is discussed at length in Reformed Church, chapters 12-14.
Secondly, many *senhores de engenho*, the Portuguese sugar mill owners, had amassed huge financial debts to Dutch and Jewish merchants. Because the ongoing guerilla wars between the Portuguese and the Dutch had caused many plantations to be destroyed and a considerable number of African workers to run away, many *senhores de engenho* were forced to borrow large sums of money in order torevitalize their sugar mills. In addition, due to the declining price of sugar on the Amsterdam staple-market, these same Portuguese sugar planters had lost large sums of income. By the early 1640s, their debts had risen to such heights that many Portuguese planters saw armed revolt against the Dutch as the only way out of financial dependency.\textsuperscript{207}

Thirdly and finally, the WIC failure to occupy Salvador da Bahia, the Portuguese capital of Brazil, which provided the Portuguese colonists in the northeast with continuing moral and military support. Although the WIC had consolidated its hold on most of the northeast by 1640, the Dutch were unable to dislodge the Portuguese from their well-fortified coastal capital despite repeated attacks. Moreover, after the restoration of the Portuguese Crown and the subsequent Portuguese secession from the Spanish-Habsburg Empire in 1640, Bahia officials successfully appealed to renewed patriotic fervor among Portuguese colonists to reclaim the northeastern provinces from the Dutch. At this point the WIC could still have secured its hold over the northeast if it had quickly extended the recently made truce between Portugal and the Dutch Republic in Europe in the spring of 1641 to the Atlantic world. However, feeling overly confident in its military power, the High Council, with approval from the *Heeren XIX*, deliberately postponed

\textsuperscript{207} For the growing dependency of the Portuguese planters, see Van den Boogaart, “Nederlandse Expansie in het Atlantische gebied,” 122-123, 130-131. See also *Nederlanders in Brazilië*, 156-159.
truce negotiations with Bahia and instead quickly occupied the important slave port of Portuguese Luanda in Angola as well as the Amazonian province of Maranhão in the summer and fall of 1641.  

Outraged by this WIC duplicity, colonial authorities in Bahia now began to contact the disgruntled and indebted *senhores de engenhos* in the northeast to plan a major revolt against Dutch rule in the northeast. Initially, the Portuguese plans for a revolt in the provinces of Pernambuco, Itamaracá, Paraíba, and Rio Grande proved difficult to execute in the face of a strong WIC army and the presence of the capable central leader Maurits. But after Maurits returned to Europe and the *Heeren XIX* recalled large numbers of soldiers from Brazil in 1644 to save money, Bahia officials and prominent sugar planters were finally able to carry out their conspiracy for a war “in the name of divine liberty” against Protestant Dutch rule. In a carefully designed plan, several guerilla units -- consisting of Portuguese soldiers, Tupis, and free blacks and mulattoes -- would depart from Bahia and by traveling through the hinterlands team up with Portuguese rebels in Pernambuco.  

Although WIC officials were able to arrest many Portuguese ringleaders in May, 1645, because several fearful Portuguese colonists backed out at the last moment, the able rebel leader João Fernandes Vieira succeeded in keeping the first Dutch

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208 For these diplomatic and military developments, see Boxer, *Dutch in Brazil*, 100-111. See also the recent study by Evaldo Cabral de Mello, *O Negócio do Brasil: Portugal, os Países Baixos e o Nordeste, 1641-1669* (Rio de Janeiro: Topbooks, 1998). For a more detailed discussion of the Dutch conquest of Luanda, see Ratelband, *Nederlanders in West Afrika*, chapter 5.  

209 For the withdrawal of WIC army troops by the *Heeren XIX* and the Portuguese conspiracy to revolt, see *Nederlanders in Brazilië*, 160-163. See also *Dutch in Brazil*, 156, 159-166. For the war for “divine liberty”, see *Dutch in Brazil*, 166.
counterattacks in Pernambuco at bay until having made contact with the Bahian guerilla troops. This military success emboldened Portuguese colonists in the other provinces to rise against the Dutch and by August 1645 the Dutch had practically lost all control over the northeastern countryside to the Portuguese guerillas. It was in this dramatic context in the summer of 1645 that the High Council instructed Listry to urgently ask the Tupi regidors Poty, Paraupaba, and Carapeba “to offer proof of their devotion to the Company.” Faced with a smaller WIC army following the recent troop reductions, the Recife councilors rightly concluded that the sizable Tupi population was the only hope for survival against thousands of Portuguese rebels and their Indian and Afro-Brazilian allies.²¹⁰

In calling upon Tupi support, the High Council heavily relied on the intercultural communication skills of Poty, Paraupaba, and Carapeba. From the time of the outbreak of the Portuguese revolt, the daily minutes of the High Council contain numerous references to meetings and written messages between WIC authorities and the three Tupi leaders. Revealing their extensive literacy and familiarity with European forms of communication, the Indian regidors wrote most of their letters to the High Council themselves. For instance, in October 1649, Paraupaba requested and received a quantity of paper from the High Council, presumably to keep up his correspondence with WIC officials. It is unknown whether this communication was in the Dutch language, but since both Poty and Paraupaba were known to have some proficiency in Dutch, it is likely that

²¹⁰ For the instructions to Listry, see Johan Nieuhof, Gedenkweerdige Brasiliaanse Zeeen Lant-Reize: Behelzende Al het geen op dezelve is voorgevallen. Benefens Een Bondige Beschrijving van gantsch Neerlants Brasil (Amsterdam, 1682), 68-69, 76 (quote). Nieuhof was a Dutch merchant who traveled to Brazil where he became involved with the WIC administration. For the validity of his account, see Dutch in Brazil, 294-295.
the language used was Dutch. In addition, the High Council provided Poty with a personal secretary for almost two years to assist him in corresponding with WIC officials. In mid-February 1647, Johannes Engelaer, “schoolmaster and comforter of the sick to the Brazilians, requested rewards for services, as his son Samuel Engelaer had been in service of the Brazilians for 21 months and been used as writer for the Regidor Pedro Pottij.” This situation seems to have been exceptional since no other documentary evidence exists of Dutch colonists serving as secretaries for the Tupi regidors. However, the appointment of a European personal assistant to a native leader for almost two years clearly reveals the importance of the Tupi mediators for the WIC.211

Following the outbreak of the Portuguese revolt, Poty, Paraupaba, and Carapeba declared themselves loyal allies of the WIC and provided much military support. The recently appointed Tupi regidors realized only all too well that the Portuguese would not treat them kindly if the Dutch were driven from Brazil. Since the sixteenth century, Portuguese authorities had treated the indigenous peoples of Brazil as subjects of the Portuguese Crown. This policy was continued during the era of Spanish Habsburg rule of Portugal from 1580 to 1640. When many Tupis in the northeast sided with the Dutch in the 1630s, Iberian officials considered those Indians therefore to be rebels against the Portuguese Crown. Because rebellion against monarchical authority was viewed as one of the greatest offenses in early modern Europe, Iberian colonial officials felt justified executing or enslaving any Tupi who did not proclaim his loyalty to the Portuguese.212

211 For Paraupaba requesting writing paper, see DN, Inv. No. 73: October 18, 1649. For the quotation about Samuel Engelaer as secretary to Poty, see DN, Inv. No. 71: February 17, 1647.

212 For the Portuguese attitude toward the Indian allies of the Dutch, see for instance the letter from André Vidal de Negreiros, a prominent rebel leader, to the High Council dated
Moreover, Poty and Paraupaba knew that many of their Potiguar kinsmen had been killed or enslaved by the Portuguese following the friendly visit of a WIC fleet to the Potiguars at the Bay of Treason in 1625. Similarly, during the invasion of Portuguese guerillas and their Indian and Afro-Brazilian allies in the northeast during the winter of 1639-1640, the Dutch intercepted letters written by Iberian officers instructing the guerillas to give no quarter to either the Dutch or their Indian allies. Although Maurits and the High Council held special talks with the Portuguese authorities in Bahia in 1640 to discuss the deteriorating cycle of retaliatory warfare, no firm agreements regarding the treatment of Indian prisoners was made by either side.\footnote{The treatment of the Potiguars by the Portuguese was related by Paraupaba himself in a pamphlet he published in Holland in 1657. See Antonio Paraupaba, \textit{Twee Remonstrantien ofte Vertogen} (The Hague, 1657), 8-9. For the interception of the letters in 1639-1640, see \textit{Dutch in Brazil}, 92-99.}

After the outbreak of the Portuguese revolt in the summer of 1645, Poty, Paraupaba, and Carapeba concluded that they could not expect any mercy from the Portuguese rebels. The brutal actions of the Portuguese rebels perpetrated during the summer of 1645 quickly revealed that the Tupi leaders were not mistaken. In August of that year several massacres of pro-Dutch Tupis took place that must have enraged Poty and Paraupaba. Sometime in mid-August Portuguese rebels led by Andre Vidal de Negreiros forced the surrender of a Dutch fort nearby the town of Serinhaem in the province of Pernambuco. While the WIC soldiers and officers were spared, Andre Vidal...
ordered the execution of thirty-three Tupi warriors that had supported the Dutch. To signify that the Portuguese Crown did not take the challenge to its sovereign authority lightly, these Tupi men were strangled and hung up on the palisades of the fort. In addition, all the Tupi women and children that were found among the WIC garrison were divided as slaves among Andre Vidal’s men.214

For Poty, Paraupaba, and Carapeba the rebellion was not so much an imperial conflict between the Dutch and the Portuguese, but primarily a crucial war for Tupi independence from Portuguese colonial rule. In their roles as an emerging native elite within the Dutch colonial hierarchy, the three Tupi regidors used their prominent status to forge a broad Indian alliance that sought to unite diverse native groups against the Portuguese, including even Indians who supported the Portuguese. At the same time, while the struggle against the Portuguese rebels was obviously the most important concern for the three Tupi regidors, they did not necessarily become obedient followers of the Dutch. Instead, Poty, Paraupaba, and also Carapeba also utilized their newly established positions to further the autonomy of their people within the Dutch colony.

The initial response of the three Tupi regidors to the outbreak of the Portuguese rebellion was to shelter their own kinsmen. During the late summer many Tupi villages relocated to the vicinity of Dutch coastal forts. In September 1645, a WIC official in

214 This massacre at Serinhaem is described in several contemporary sources. See especially Nieuhof, Gedenkweerdige Brasiliaenese Zee- en Lant-reize, 119-121; and the “Report on Brazil drawn up by Hendrik Hamel, Adriaen van Bullestraten, and Pieter Bas,” undated but probably fall 1645, Manuscript Collection, Royal Library, The Hague, folios 62-63. Significantly, in his pamphlet published in The Hague in 1657, Paraupaba also referred to the massacre at Serinhaem. See Paraupaba, Twee Remonstrantiën ofte Vertogen, 9-10. See also Harald S. van der Straaten, Hollandse Pioniers in Brazilië (Franeker: Van Wijnen, 1988), 105. For another massacre of Tupi prisoners captured by the Portuguese, see LPB, Inv. No. 60: Testimony of Three Brazilians to the High Council, August 30, 1645.
Paraíba wrote the High Council that Poty and his people had established a major fortified camp nearby Fort Margarita. Similarly, Carapeba withdrew some 1,500 Tupis, most of whom were women and children, to the island of Itamaracá upon which the WIC had constructed the strategic Fort Orange. Although the Tupi refugees were initially safe from Portuguese attacks at these places, their inability to harvest manioc because of the ongoing guerilla war made them increasingly dependent upon Dutch food and material supplies. The situation became so bad for the Tupis that the Dutch Reformed Church in the United Provinces collected through local church charities in the province of Holland large amounts of clothing that were sent to the “poor Brazilians” in 1647 and 1648.215

While Poty, Paraupaba, and Carapeba provided a safe haven for their women, children, and elders, they actively responded to the Portuguese killings of captured Tupis by joining WIC expeditions against the rebels and also by unleashing retaliatory strikes against Portuguese colonists. Although the High Council was impressed with the military support they received from the Tupis, they were simultaneously concerned that Tupi attacks against Portuguese farmers would only further anger the Portuguese colonists. However, because of the pressing Portuguese guerilla attacks and their own reduced forces, the High Council was unable to prevent the Tupis from attacking outlying Portuguese sugar mills or farms. Moreover, since revenge killings were an important

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215 For the relocation of Poty’s people, see DN, Inv. No. 71: September 26, 1645. For Itamaracá, see LPB, Inv. No. 60: Report from Councilor Adriaen van Bullestrate Relating to the Defenses of Paraíba, Rio Grande, and Itamaracá, October 1645. For Itamaracá, see the entry for October 20. For the material aid given to the “poor Brazilians”, see Reformed Church, 208-210. I will discuss this aid in more detail in chapter 4.
social value in Tupi culture, Poty, Paraupaba, and Carapeba avenged their kinsmen who had been murdered by the Portuguese in Serinhaem and other places.216

Shortly after the outbreak of the Portuguese rebellion in July 1645 Dutch officials in the province of Rio Grande reported to their superiors in Recife that both Poty and Carapeba were personally leading warparties against Portuguese farmers. However, it was only after the Serinhaem massacre in August that Tupi warriors led by Paraupaba actually killed Portuguese colonists. Significantly, the mass killing of predominately Portuguese women, children, and old men in the province of Rio Grande in early October 1645 was perpetrated by not only the Tupi-speaking Potiguars led by Paraupaba but also by some Dutch soldiers and by Tarairiu Indians led by their WIC liaison officer Jacob Rabe. The indiscriminate slaughter of Portuguese non-combatants dramatically showed the large hatred Paraupaba’s men and the Tarairius held toward the Portuguese. In addition, because the Tupis and the Tarairius were traditional enemies of each other, their unique participation in this massacre reveals how threatened they felt by the Portuguese rebellion against the Dutch. By actively participating in this destructive attack, Paraupaba clearly signified that an alliance with indigenous enemies of the Tupis was needed to combat the more important threat of the Portuguese.217

216 For the importance of revenge killings in Tupi culture, see Monteiro, “Crises and Transformations of Invaded Societies,” and Castro, From the Enemy’s Point of View, 272-280.

217 For the plundering of Portuguese farms in July 1645, see LPB, Inv. No. 60: Report from Servaes Carpentier to the High Council, July 11, 1645. For the massacre of Portuguese families in Rio Grande, see DN, Inv. No. 71: October 10, 1645. See also the Report from Councilor van Bullestraete in LPB, Inv. No. 60: October 1645; and the “Report of Brazil drawn up by Hendrik Hamel,” folios 18-19. For contemporary Portuguese accounts of the massacre in Rio Grande, see Manuel Calado, O valeroso Lucideno (originally published in 1648) (Reprint: Belo Horizonte and São Paulo: Itatiaia and Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1987) (Coleção reconquista do Brasil, 2nd series) 2: 126-130; and Diogo Lopes Santiago, História da Guerra de Pernambuco e feitos memoráveis do mestre de campo João Fernandes Vieira (Recife: Fundarpe, 1984), chapter XXIII. For the usefulness of these two sources, see Dutch in Brazil, 299. The
After their successful but devastating attack in early October, Paraupaba and Nhanduí, the principal Tarairiu leader, even held a special council with Dutch officials in Fort Ceulen in Rio Grande where they discussed future plans to keep the province clear of Portuguese guerillas. While all the participants in this unique conference agreed to break down the fortifications that Portuguese rebels and colonists had constructed throughout Rio Grande, the Tarairius declined to cooperate more closely with Paraupaba in a campaign against Portuguese guerillas. Instead, the Tarairius resumed their traditional pattern of seasonal migrations from the hinterlands of Rio Grande to the coast where they subsisted on horticulture, hunting, and plundering colonists’ livestock. Nevertheless, despite the failure of a Tarairiu-Tupi alliance, Paraupaba had clearly indicated a willingness to go beyond traditional patterns of intertribal relations in northeastern Brazil.218

In addition to seeking a closer relationship with the Tarairius, Paraupaba also showed a considerable interest in uniting the Tupis with other Indian peoples after the outbreak of the Portuguese rebellion. Using his Dutch language skills and his prestigious status as one of the three Tupi regenten, Paraupaba visited Recife in early July, 1645, massacre in Rio Grande was recently in the news after the Catholic Church beatified the Portuguese victims. In early 2000 the Catholic Church beatified several Portuguese victims and accused Paraupaba and especially Jacob Rabe and his Tarairius for the killings. As we will see in the next chapter, Rabe and the Tarairius were also responsible for another incident in Rio Grande in July. For the beatification, see for instance “17th Century Brazilian Martyrs to be beatified,” http://www.cin.org/archives/cinnews/200003/0003.html (accessed on February 5, 2002); “Historia dos Martires,” http://www.tribunadonorte.com.br/especial/martires/indios.htm (accessed on February 14, 2002); Marc Leijendekker, “Zaligverklaringen na ‘calvinistische’ moord,” NRC Handelsblad, March 3, 2000. I thank Ernst van den Boogaart for bringing the last article to my attention. For a critical view of the beatification, see F.L. Schalkwijk, “As lagrimas de Cunhau,” http://www.thirdmill.org (accessed on February 5, 2002).

218 For this council between Paraupaba and Nhanduí, see LPB, Report from Councilor van Bullestraete, October 1645. I will discuss the relations between the Tarairius and the Dutch in detail in the next chapter.
where he pleaded the High Council to release any Indians held as slaves by the Dutch. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the High Council had strongly prohibited the enslavement of Tupis in the northeast for fear of undermining the Dutch-Tupi alliance. However, faced with the continuing African slave shortage in Brazil, the WIC authorities tolerated the use of Indians as forced laborers by European colonists as long as these slaves were not ethnic Tupis. Most of these Indian slaves were consequently so called “Tapuyas”, a Tupi term denoting non-Tupi natives. In addition, during their occupation of Maranhão island from 1642 to early 1644, the Dutch had often enslaved local Tupis there and shipped them down south to Pernambuco where they were put to work on sugar mills.219

Using his influential position as Tupi liaison to the Dutch, Paraupaba demanded “that all the Brazilians from Maranhão and all the Tapoijers who were kept as slaves, must be set free and be placed with them to live in the aldeias.” Paraupaba’s demand clearly confronted the High Council with a dilemma. On the one hand, because of the continuing labor shortage and the subsequent decreasing sugar production, the WIC officials tolerated the enslavement of Tapuyas. On the other hand, in the face of the Portuguese rebellion, the High Council realized that the Tupis should be kept as allies as firmly as possible. Eventually, the Recife authorities replied to Paraupaba “we will give absolute freedom to all Brazilians and Tapoyers, from whichever nation they might be.” Although the High Council did not inform Paraupaba that the WIC actually lacked financial resources to buy and set free the Indian slaves from their European owners,

219 For the quotation and Paraupaba’s meeting with the High Council, see DN, Inv. No. 71: July 3, 1645. For Indian slavery in Dutch Brazil, see for instance Nederlanders in Brazilië, 211-213. See also Van den Boogaart, “Nederlandse Expansie in het Atlantische gebied,” 125; and Reformed Church, 174.
Paraupaba’s successful demand revealed his goals of promoting intertribal unity in the face of the Portuguese threat.220

Similarly, in March 1648 Paraupaba again functioned as the principal architect of an attempt to forge an intra-regional alliance between the coastal Tupis of the northeast and more distant indigenous communities. During an inspection trip to the coastal fort Margarita in Paraíba in early March 1648, the Recife councilor Michiel van Goch encountered Paraupaba. Reporting back to his colleagues in Recife, Van Goch noted that “from Rio Grande had arrived the regidor Antonij Paraupaba with a principal of the Brazilians from Siara, with the intention to go to the recif, in order to request permission from the council there to go with the aforementioned principal to Siara so as to bring a large troop of Brazilians,” to Rio Grande and use them as military allies against the Portuguese guerillas.221

Although the Dutch were sorely in need of more military support by early 1648 in the face of a continuing Portuguese guerilla war, Van Goch opposed Paraupaba’s proposal to make an alliance with the Tupis from the northern province of Ceará. His opposition had two sources. First of all, from the fall of 1637 to late 1643 the Dutch had themselves established a foothold in this province in order to establish an alliance with the Ceará Tupis and to exploit reported saltpans. This alliance failed however, because the local Dutch officials increasingly abused the Tupis for labor services the Indians soon turned against the Dutch and forced the latter out by December 1643. As a result, by early

220 For both quotations, see DN, July 3, 1645.

221 For van Goch’s visit to Paraíba, see DN, Inv. No. 72: March 4, 1648.
1648 the High Council was still very wary of establishing a new alliance with the Ceará Tupis.222

Secondly, Van Goch rejected Paraupaba’s proposal because he suspected that Paraupaba was more interested in obtaining material gifts from the High Council than in functioning as a useful negotiator between the WIC and the Ceará Tupis. Although Van Goch was probably right in arguing that Paraupaba was attracted to the prestigious rewards given by the High Council for his role as mediator, Van Goch neglected the possibility that Paraupaba sincerely wanted to accomplish an alliance with the Ceará Tupis. In this respect it is significant to mention that the High Council received a letter from Paraupaba dated March 20 in which he requested trade goods and permission to go to Ceará in order to establish an alliance with the local Tupis there. While the High Council seems to have turned down his request, Paraupaba’s insistence on negotiating a friendly relationship with the Ceará Tupis is another reflection of his interest in an anti-Portuguese intertribal Indian movement.223

Yet another indication that the Tupi regenten utilized their skills as cross-cultural mediators to promote a pan-Indian awareness in the wake of the Portuguese revolt of 1645 was the unique correspondence between Pieter Poty and his cousin Filipe Camarão. Camarão was the principal Potiguar leader of those Indians that had sided with the

222 For the Dutch in Ceará, see for instance Van den Boogaart, Zo wijd de wereld strekt, 94, no. 83; Nederlanders in Brazilië, 222-223. Interestingly, from 1649 to 1654 the Dutch established a new stronghold in Ceará in order to (unsuccessfully) search for silver mines. For this, see Rita Krommen, Mathias Beck und die Westindische Kompagnie: Zur Herrschaft der Niederlander im kolonialen Ceará (Koln: Arbeitskreis Spanien-Portugal-Lateinamerika, 2001). This book can be viewed in its entirety on the following website: http://www.uni-koeln.de/phil-fak/aspla/pdf/krommen.pdf (accessed on May 14, 2002). See also Dutch in Brazil, 220.

223 For van Goch’s rejection, see DN, Inv. No. 72: March 4, 1648. For Paraupaba’s letter from March 20, see DN, Inv. No. 72: April 3, 1645.
Portuguese since the Dutch invasion in the early 1630s, and he did not change his affiliation. Although we don’t exactly know the real kinship relationship between Poty and Camarão, both Portuguese and Dutch sources consistently refer to them as cousins and both Camarão’s and Poty’s last names translate as “shrimp” in respectively Portuguese and Tupi, which suggest similar familial backgrounds.

Despite the enmity of their allies, Camarão and Poty had very similar careers. Both men functioned as negotiators between their people and the European powers, with whom they were closely aligned. Both Poty and Camarão had become prominent leaders who were rewarded by their European allies with prestigious gifts and official titles. Whereas Poty became aldeia captain and ultimately regidor, Portuguese officials appointed Camarão to the position of Capitão-Mor or “Captain of the Browns” or Indians. Moreover, like Poty, Camarão also received a regular salary from his European sponsors. Similarly, while Poty presented himself to the WIC officials as a Protestant Christian, Portuguese contemporaries considered Camarão a devout Catholic. Finally, whereas Poty was a staunch enemy of the Portuguese, Camarão fought the Dutch with great zeal.224

What is most remarkable in the relationship between Poty and Camarão during this volatile period is that neither of them seems to have actively fought the other. For all their attacks on either Portuguese or WIC soldiers and colonists, Poty and Camarão refrained from harming their Potiguar relatives associated with the respective European enemy. Although there is documentary evidence that Indian guerillas led by Camarão

224 For Camarão’s career, see the biography by José Antônio Gonsalves de Mello, D. Antônio Filipe Camarão: Capitão-Mor dos índios da costa do nordeste do brasil (Recife: Universidade do Recife, 1954).
burnt down manioc fields and abandoned *aldeias* belonging to Tupis allied with the Dutch in Paraíba in March 1646, there is no indication that Camarão and Poty actually clashed with each other. Similarly, Dutch sources sometimes reveal how the Portuguese-Dutch wars had broken up many Tupi families against their will. For instance, in November 1649, WIC officials interrogated a Tupi named Gabriel Correa after he and seven men and women had been caught crossing into Dutch controlled territory. Instead of being guerillas, Correa and the seven other individuals declared that they had spent the last several years in Camarão’s camp as passive followers and that they now sought to reunite themselves with their Indian relatives and friends in *aldeias* loyal to the WIC.\(^\text{225}\)

This policy of avoiding a civil war among Tupi groups such as the Potiguars was also articulated in a series of letters that Poty and Camarão exchanged with each other in the mid-1640s. From the fall of 1645 until the spring of 1646, Camarão and Poty exchanged a series of letters in the Tupi language in which they attempted to persuade each other to switch sides in the Portuguese-Dutch conflict. Remarkably, while Camarão wrote multiple letters, Poty reportedly only wrote one, albeit long, letter to Camarão, dated October 31, 1645. In his letter, Poty wrote Camarão: “I am a Christian and a better Christian than you, not contaminating myself with the idolatry that you rely on.”

Although historians have traditionally interpreted this correspondence as either a unique opportunity for the linguistic study of the Tupi language or as evidence of the divided

\(^{225}\) For Camarão’s attack on Paraíba *aldeias* in March 1646, see DN, Inv. No. 71: March 19, 1646. For Correa, see LPB, Inv. No. 65: Interrogation of Gabriel Correa, Brazilian, captured on Nov. 25, 1649. For other Tupis crossing back from Camarão’s side to Tupi relatives loyal to the Dutch, see LPB, Inv. No.65: Examinations of Phillipo and his wife Isabella, Brazilians, Recife, October 31, 1649. For a similar development of an indigenous people avoiding civil war, see Karim M. Tiro, “A ’Civil War’? Rethinking Iroquois Participation in the American Revolution,” *Explorations in Early American Culture* 4 (2000): 148-165.
loyalties of the Indians in the Portuguese-Dutch wars, few have noticed that Poty and Camarão were also seriously concerned about each other’s fate.226

While admonishing Camarão for supporting the “Godless Portuguese scoundrels”, Poty at the same time suggested to his cousin “to come to me so that we together with the help of friends may restore to freedom all our blood relatives, and then to lead a good life in this our land.” Poty argued that the Dutch were much more powerful than the Portuguese because “I have been in that country [the United Provinces] and have been educated there; ships, money, and everything there is in abundance like the stars in the sky.” At the end of the letter, Poty inquired sarcastically about the wounds that Camarão had recently sustained while attacking fort Orange in Itamaracá. Camarão responded in March 1646 with a letter to Poty in which he proclaimed to pardon and forgive both Poty and Paraupaba for having chosen the side of the heretical Protestant Dutch invaders.

What stands out in this interesting letter exchange is that both men used their acquired literacy skills to appeal to each other’s identities as native persons united by kinship ties. Moreover, despite each other’s participation on the opposing side, both Poty and Camarão considered that these kinship ties were at least as important as their loyalties in the Dutch-Portuguese conflict.227

226 For views of the correspondence as being evidence of divided loyalties, see Dutch in Brazil, 185; and Reformed Church, 204-207. Recent Brazilian anthropologists have emphasized the ethnolinguistic value of the correspondence, see Beatriz G. Dantas, José Augusto L. Sampaio, and Maria Rosário G. de Carvalho, “Os povos indígenas no Nordeste brasileiro: um esboço histórico,” in Manuela Carneiro de Cunha et al, História dos índios no Brasil (Sao Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1992): 431-456, especially 440. For Poty’s letter to Camarão, see LPB, Inv. No. 61: Dutch translation of a letter written in Tupi by Pieter Poty dated October 31, 1645. A Protestant minister translated this letter from Tupi into Dutch. Poty also informed Camarão in the letter that he still regularly received instruction in the Christian gospel.

227 LPB, Inv. No. 61: Dutch Translation of Poty’s Letter, October 31, 1645. Poty correctly pointed out the importance of naval power in the struggle for Brazil: “The sea dominates Brazil.” For Camarão’s letter in which he suggested to pardon Poty and Paraupaba, see
However, neither Poty nor Camarão eventually succeeded in persuading the other to sever their close ties to respectively the Dutch and the Portuguese. For all their close kinship ties, both men had become too closely identified with the two European powers that were increasingly driving them apart. Although it is impossible to ascertain exactly why Poty and Camarão remained firmly committed to either the Dutch or Portuguese, most likely Poty’s long association with the Dutch dating back to 1625 and Camarão’s even longer affiliation with the Portuguese prevented the two Potiguar leaders from coming closer together. Ironically, it is very probable that Poty actually learned the usefulness of establishing close ties to Europeans from his “cousin” Camarão. Since Tupi political culture was traditionally characterized by rivaling headmen and an absence of centralized leadership, neither Poty nor Camarão wished to give up their prestigious status as Tupi leaders who were materially supported by European authorities.228

Although Poty as well as Paraupaba and Carapeba were loyal supporters of the Dutch after the outbreak of the Portuguese revolt in 1645, they did not simply become docile followers of the WIC. While all three Tupi regidors actively contributed military leadership and Indian troops to the Dutch, they also used their influence as diplomats with direct access to Dutch colonial officials to improve the autonomy of their people. In this respect Poty, Paraupaba, and Carapeba continued earlier Tupi policies, challenging WIC authority whenever it threatened the welfare of their kinsmen. For example, in late

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228 On Tupi political culture, see Monteiro, “The Crises and Transformations of Invaded Societies,” 984-985; Castro, From the Enemy’s Point of View, 109-118.
July 1645 the High Council reported on “the improper actions of Domingos Fernandes Carapeva” in plundering Portuguese farms in order to feed and clothe his people who had sought refuge on Itamarica island. The Recife officials, who were rightly afraid that the depredations of Portuguese colonists by Carapeba’s men would only embolden the Portuguese rebels, were irritated with Carapeba’s behavior but were afraid to take disciplinary actions in order not to alienate “the aforementioned Carapeva (who is very popular among them and whom they wished to make King).”

As a result of incidents like these, the High Council became increasingly suspicious of the three Tupi leaders whom they had so recently appointed to the influential position of regenten. This mistrust on the part of the WIC officials was again revealed when the Portuguese captured Poty after the so-called second battle of Guararapes in February 1649. At the first battle, which had raged at the hills of Guararapes in rural Pernambuco in April 1648, recently reinforced WIC forces and their Indian allies failed to break the Portuguese siege of Recife. After the battered Dutch soldiers regained their morale during a successful amphibious raid on the rich sugar plantations around Salvador da Bahia, the High Council decided to send their reinvigorated troops on a new field campaign to break the continuing Portuguese blockade around Recife. In mid-February, more than 3,000 WIC soldiers marched out of the Dutch colonial capital, accompanied by some 200 Tupi warriors among whom was

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For Carapeba’s plundering of Portuguese farms and the High Council response, see LPB, Inv. No. 60: General Missive from the High Council to the Heeren XIX, July 31, 1645. It is unclear what the High Council implied with the reference to Carapeba wanting to be a king. Perhaps the Recife councilors confused him with Paraupaba?
Poty. But despite the numerical advantage of the Dutch forces, the Portuguese rebels ambushed and soundly defeated the WIC army.\textsuperscript{230}

In addition to exacting more than 1,000 casualties, the Portuguese also captured Pieter Poty. The High Council discussed Poty’s fate throughout the months of March and April as more information became available about the Dutch and Tupi soldiers that had been taken captive by the Portuguese after the battle. Significantly, although the Recife councilors deplored Poty’s captivity and even voiced their concerns to Portuguese officials about rumors that Poty was being tortured, the High Council was “now worried because one regidor [\textit{regent}] named [P]etro [P]otti was captured at the guararapes, and this person might be forced by the enemy to attract our brazilians.” Fortunately for the High Council this never happened, as Poty remained steadfast in his support for the Protestant Dutch cause. While his exact fate remains mysterious, Poty seems to have suffered torture and death in Portuguese captivity in Brazil. Nevertheless, the fear of the WIC officials that one of their most loyal Indian allies would quickly turn against them reveals the uneasiness and doubts the Dutch authorities had about their Tupi \textit{regenten}.\textsuperscript{231}

\textsuperscript{230} For the two battles of Guararapes, see Dutch in Brazil, 195-198 (first battle), 213-216 (second battle). See also the detailed study of W.J. van Hoboken, Witte de With in Brazilië, 1648-1649 (Werken uitgegeven door de Commissie voor Zeegeschiedenis XIII), (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 1955), chapters III and VII.

\textsuperscript{231} For the High Council’s reaction to Poty’s captivity, see DN, Inv. No. 73: March 1, 13, April 19, and 23, 1649. For the quotation, see LPB, Inv. No. 65: General Missive from the High Council to the \textit{Heeren XIX}, April 20, 1649. The circumstances surrounding Poty’s death are not entirely clear. As we will see, Paraupaba presented Poty’s death to Dutch authorities as that of a model Calvinist convert. While he claims to have relied on the testimony of Dutch fellow prisoners of Poty, Paraupaba’s account of Poty’s death should primarily be seen as part of an attempt to obtain official Dutch support for the Tupis after the Dutch had left Brazil in 1654. See Paraupaba, Twee Verscheiden Remonstrantien, 11-12. Reformed Church in Dutch Brazil, 211, supports Paraupaba’s description without taking into account Paraupaba’s political motivations for presenting Poty as a model Calvinist convert. On the same page Schalkwijk does quote from the account of the contemporary Portuguese priest Raphael de Jesus, describing how Poty died just prior to being shipped to Portugal.
In addition to Poty and Carapeba, the WIC officials were also doubtful of the loyalty of Paraupaba. For all his active military support for the Dutch fight against the Portuguese after 1645, the High Council continued to view Paraupaba with suspicion. The Recife councilor’s skeptical view of Paraupaba, like their attitude toward Poty and Carapeba, was largely caused by the Tupi leader’s ongoing policy of giving preference to the well-being of his people rather than strictly following the directions of the Dutch colonial authorities. Ironically, the mutual distrust between Paraupaba and the High Council only increased after the outbreak of the Portuguese revolt. Especially after the second battle of Guararapes in February 1649, when the Dutch and their Tupi allies became essentially confined to small coastal enclaves in Pernambuco, Itamaracá, Paraíba, and Rio Grande, the relationship between Paraupaba and the WIC authorities deteriorated.

Significantly, most of the incidents between the Potiguar leader and the High Council in this period concerned the issue of Dutch colonial jurisdiction over their Tupi allies. While the Recife councilors considered the Tupis subjects to WIC rule, Paraupaba viewed Dutch attempts to discipline Tupis according to Dutch-Roman law as an infringement on Tupi independence. For instance, in July 1652 Paraupaba openly challenged Dutch authority when WIC officials attempted to execute three Tupis from Rio Grande for killing several members of a Tapuya Indian community who were friendly with the Dutch. Right before the execution was to take place in Fort Ceulen, Paraupaba angrily told Peter Hansen Hajstrup, a German-Danish WIC liaison officer between the WIC and the Tupis, that “a state of hostility would exist between them and our nation,” if the WIC would proceed with the execution. It was only after Hansen
threatened Paraupaba with WIC military force that the Tupi leader backed down. However, Hansen also wrote “he wished that when we would arrest our own people for a similar crime, we would punish them the same.” Although Paraupaba’s contestation of WIC jurisdiction over his kinsmen ultimately failed, it is clear that he was willing to use his influential position as negotiator between the Dutch and Tupis in an effort to protect the autonomy of his people from Dutch colonial rule.\textsuperscript{232}

5. Political Refugees in the Dutch Atlantic World, 1654-1657

Both Paraupaba and Carapeba continued to perform their roles as spokesmen for their people after the Dutch surrendered their last positions in northeastern Brazil in January 1654. Although the WIC troops had managed with great difficulty to hold out in their coastal forts against the Portuguese guerillas, the increasing unwillingness among prominent merchants and authorities in the United Provinces to invest in the costly occupation of Brazil eventually sealed the fate of the Dutch in Brazil. After a Portuguese fleet blocked the harbor of Recife in December 1653, the High Council concluded that further resistance was futile. On January 26, 1654, civil and military WIC authorities subsequently signed the official surrender of all WIC possessions in Brazil in a treaty with Francisco Baretto de Menezes, the Portuguese commander-in-chief. Significantly, Baretto allowed the Dutch and Iberian Jews to leave Brazil within three months, taking all their personal possessions with them. According to the Dutch copy of the articles of

\textsuperscript{232} For this incident, see Frank Ibold, Jens Jäger, and Detlev Kraackeds Das "Memorial und Jurenal" des Peter Hansen Hajstrup (1624-1672) (Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins 103) (Neumunster: Wachholtz Verlag, 1995), 98-100. For a similar incident involving colonial jurisdiction over Tupis, see DN, Inv. No. 75: September 11 and October 9, 1651. In this case Paraupaba unsuccessfully requested the High Council to pardon a Tupi man accused of murdering a fellow Tupi.
surrender, Baretto also promised to pardon a certain commander named Anthony Mendes “and all other Brazilians, located in the town and forts of Recife, and also all Mulattoes, Mamaluquen, and the Negros,” who had supported the Dutch.\textsuperscript{233}

Despite these official Portuguese promises, the Indian allies of the WIC knew from experience that they could not expect any clemency from the Portuguese. The Tupis had not forgotten the massacres committed against their kinsmen by the Portuguese at Serinhaem, and they rightly concluded that once the WIC evacuated, they would be faced with the wrath of the Portuguese colonists. The news of the surrender of the Dutch in Brazil therefore caused Tupis throughout the northeast to flee by the thousands to the isolated province of Ceará, where the WIC held on to a coastal fort even after the formal Dutch surrender at Recife. According to Mathias Beck, the local WIC commander in Ceará, the angry Tupi refugees “did nothing but swear and curse the Dutch whom they had served and assisted so faithfully for many years.” Beck also informed the Heeren XIX that the Tupis accused the Dutch of abandoning the Indians and delivering them as “eternal slaves in hands of the Portuguese.”\textsuperscript{234}

\textsuperscript{233} For the last months of Dutch Brazil and its surrender, see \textit{Dutch in Brazil}, 234-245. For the general international diplomatic context, see Cabral de Mello, \textit{Negocio do Brasil}. For the Portuguese pardon to Mendes and the Indians and Afro-Brazilians, see the pamphlet \textit{Articulen Ende conditien gemaeckt by het overleveren van Brasilien, Als mede het Recif, Maurits Stadt ende Forten ende Sterckten der aen dependerende, gesloten den 26 January 1654} (The Hague, 1654). See also the conditions of surrender discussed by the High Council in DNA, Section 1, Hof van Holland, Criminal Papers, Inv. No. 5252: Papers Regarding the Surrender of Brazil: DN: January 29, 1654. \textit{Nederlanders in Brazilië}, 197, argues that Mendes commanded a company consisting of Tupis, free blacks, and mulattoes.

\textsuperscript{234} For Mathias Beck and the Indian refugees in Ceará, see his letter to the Heeren XIX written from Barbados in LPB, Inv. No. 67: October 8, 1654. Beck would later become the highest WIC official at Curacao during the 1650s. For Beck, see Krommen, \textit{Mathias Beck und die Westindische Kompagnie}. Significantly, the Portuguese initiated a large-scale offensive against the Indian peoples who had supported the Dutch after 1654. For the brutal frontier war in the northeast that followed, see Maria Idalina de Cruz Pires, \textit{Guerra dos Bárbaros: resistência indígena e conflictos no nordeste colonial} (Recife, 1990).
It was in this context of Indian unrest and anger toward the Dutch that Paraupaba and also Carapeba traveled to the United Provinces to persuade authorities to continue supporting their Tupi allies. It seems likely that Paraupaba, who had twice previously visited the United Provinces, knew that personally meeting with the Heeren XIX or members of the even more powerful States-General could aid the Tupis in their fight against the Portuguese. Carapeba’s departure is unrecorded; but according to an entry in a WIC officer’s notebook Paraupaba boarded a WIC vessel with his wife and three children in early February 1654. The same notebook records that Anthonio Paraupaba’s father Gaspar, whom also had visited the Dutch Republic in 1625 and who had served as an interpreter for the Dutch in Ceará from 1649 to 1654, dramatically rejected an offer to accompany his son to Europe because “he wanted to end his life in the wilderness among his Nation, rather than sailing with us back to Holland.”

After their arrival in the United Provinces in the summer of 1654, Paraupaba and probably also Carapeba immediately lobbied various influential Dutch authorities for material and military support for their people. In early August 1654, Paraupaba, “former regidor of the Brazilians in Rio Grande,” officially registered a remonstrance with the States-General to request assistance for “the Brazilians in general as well as for his own maintenance in particular.” Using his skills as cross-cultural mediator, Paraupaba addressed the States-General in the Dutch language that he had learnt during his previous visit to the Republic in the 1620s. In addition, by emphasizing the adoption of Protestant Christianity by the Tupis, Paraupaba sought to portray the Tupis as having made

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235 For Paraupaba’s departure to the Dutch Republic, see Iböld, eds. Das “Memorial and Jurenal” des Peter Hansen, 108. For Paraupaba’s father Gaspar in Ceará, see for instance, LPB, Inv. No. 65: Journal of Mathias Beck from Ceará, March 20-April 30, 1649.
considerable progress toward civilization. Paraupaba concluded his petition by declaring that he “trusted firmly that Your High Mightinesses (who have always showed themselves to be true Fathers and protectors of the oppressed and exiled, and sincere supporters of God’s true Church) will support the miserable Brazilian Nation and continue the missionization by the true Reformed Christian Religion as soon as possible by dispatching relief to them.” Finally, Paraupaba appealed for personal support for himself and his two sons whom he had brought with him to the Republic.\textsuperscript{236}

Despite Paraupaba’s dramatic and eloquent plea, the States-General did not respond favorably to his request. No documentary evidence has yet been found to indicate that either the States-General or the WIC provided the Tupis with military support after the WIC officially withdrew from Brazil in January 1654. Nor is any likely to turn up, because in the summer of 1654, both the Heeren XIX and the States-General were in no mood to finance shipments of arms or other military aid to Brazil. Although a vocal minority in the Republic angrily demanded harsh actions against the Portuguese and even appealed directly for Dutch aid to the “poor Brazilians”, the WIC simply lacked resources; the Brazilian adventure had drained all its coffers. Moreover, the Dutch Republic had only recently concluded a hard-fought war with England that made the States-General wary of removing strategic naval forces from the North Sea to the southern Atlantic. Finally, influential Amsterdam merchants preferred peaceful and profitable trade with Portugal to expensive military campaigns that could endanger Dutch economic interests in the Iberian Peninsula and the Mediterranean. There is some

\textsuperscript{236} For Paraupaba’s first remonstrance, see DNA, Archive of the States-General (ASG), Secret Resolutions (SR), Register of Resolutions Relating to West Indian Affairs, Inv. No. 4846: January 3, 1652-December 29, 1663: August 7 and 8, 1654, 107. For the quotations relating to Paraupaba’s request, see Paraupaba, \textit{Twee Verscheiden Remonstrantien}, 3-5.
evidence that local churches in the province of Zeeland provided some material aid to
Brazilian Indians by way of Dutch privateers operating in the southern Atlantic, but that
is all.237

While the States-General rejected Paraupaba’s first major request, the authorities
felt obliged to support Paraupaba and his relatives so far from Brazil. Unable to use his
specialized intercultural skills in the Republic, Paraupaba was temporarily placed in a
Dutch military unit where he could be easily supervised and contacted by the authorities.
In August 1654, the States-General requested the delegates of the province of Holland to
provide financial assistance to Paraupaba and to appoint him “to one or another Company
on horseback so as to sustain him during his stay here.” According to minutes from the
States-General, Paraupaba and his family were lodged at a cavalry unit in the strategic
border-town of ‘s-Hertogenbosch. Similarly, in early July 1656, the States-General
discussed a recent letter from the Amsterdam Chamber of the WIC asking that “Domingo
Fernandes Carapera [Carapeba], of the Brazilian nation, who has served as commander of
Brazilian forces, and with wife and children now has arrived here, will be provided with
employment by the High Mightinesses.” The States-General granted this request and they

237 For the foreign policy of the Dutch Republic in this time, see Boxer, Dutch in Brazil,
235-236, 246-258. See also Cabral de Mello, O Negócio do Brasil; Jonathan I. Israel, The Dutch
Republic and the Hispanic World, 1606-1661 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982),
chapter 7; and Cornelis ter Haar, De diplomatieke betrekkingen tussen de Republiek en Portugal,
1640-1661 (Groningen: Wolters, 1961), chapters 5 and 6. The vocal minority in the Republic
calling for retaliations against Portugal published many pamphlets. One of these called for aid to
the “poor Brazilians”; see the anonymously published Kort, Bondigh ende Waerachtigh Verhael
van ‘t schandelijk overgeven ende verlaten vande voornaemste Conquesten van Brasil.
(Middelburg, 1655), 85. Reformed Church, 213, refers to aid by the churches in Zeeland but his
reference for this assertion can not be adequately checked. Schalkwijk refers to a manuscript from
the usually very reliable historian Franz Binder but the exact title, location, and publication of this
manuscript is not fully listed by Schalkwijk. For Dutch privateers in the Atlantic after the defeat
of the Dutch in Brazil, see the well-researched essay by Franz Binder, “Die Zeeländische
Kaperfahrt, 1654-1662,” Archief Uitgegeven door het Koninklijk Zeeuws Genootschap der
instructed the Raad van State, an influential administrative board primarily concerned with Dutch national finances, to “place the aforementioned Fernandes in a Company of horseback.” In addition, the States-General resolved to contact the directors of all WIC Chambers to “give the same Fernandes any necessary support.”

By appointing them as military officers, the States-General honored the prominent status of Paraupaba and Carapeba. Although we don’t know what rank or position Paraupaba or Carapeba held in the companies, the scarce available documentary evidence indicates that they were financially compensated in a manner very similar to that of the payment procedures to officers in the army and navy of the United Provinces. Like regular army and naval officers, the Tupi leaders received an advance payment from the States-General with which they were expected to cover not only their personal expenses but also those of the men serving directly under their command. Since Paraupaba and Carapeba brought only their direct family members with them and not any Tupi soldiers, the advance payments were likely intended to cover the costs of living for their wives and children. While Paraupaba’s request for aid to his people in Brazil went unheeded,

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238 For Paraupaba, see DNA, 1.01.03, ASG, SR, Register Relating to West Indian Affairs (RRWIA), Inv. No. 4846: August 8, 1654, 107. For Paraupaba being in ‘s-Hertogenbosch, see ASG, SR, RRWIA, Inv. No. 4846: October 12, 1656: folio 226. For ‘s-Hertogenbosch as a garrison town in this period, see A. Vos, et al, eds. ‘s-Hertogenbosch: De geschiedenis van een Brabanse stad, 1629-1990 (Zwolle and ‘s-Hertogenbosch: Waanders, 1997), 58, 97-105. For Carapeba, see ASG, SR, RRWIA, Inv. No. 4846: July 7, 1656: 217. For the Raad van State, see S. Groenveld, et al, eds. De kogel door de kerk? De Opstand in de Nederlanden en de rol van de Unie van Utrecht, 1559-1609 (Zutphen: Walburg Press, 1979), 145-146. Significantly, Paraupaba and Carapeba were not the only non-Europeans to receive material support for their services to the Dutch. In September 1654, one “Francisco de Angola, former ensign of a Company of Negroes in Brazil, requested payment of a sum of 270 Guilders, 12 Stuivers for back payment.” The States-General granted the request of this Angolan soldier but stipulated that he should seek full compensation with the WIC. See ASG, SR, RRWIA, Inv. No. 4846: September 15, 1654.
Paraupaba’s and Carapeba’s treatment as officers by the States-General suggests that the authorities considered the Tupi leaders more than simple refugees.\(^{239}\)

In addition, Paraupaba and Carapeba might have been placed in cavalry companies because they were perceived by Dutch authorities as being useful guides and scouts for the army of the United Provinces. During the WIC occupation of northeastern Brazil, the Indian allies of the Dutch had often served as scouts and mobile forces for the regular WIC soldiers. Both Paraupaba and Carapeba had served as commanders of these Indian auxiliary troops for several decades until the WIC evacuated Brazil in 1654. Since reconnaissance and the tracking of the enemy was one of the primary tasks of cavalry units in early modern European armies, Dutch officials assigned the two Tupi leaders to cavalry companies so as to make better use of them during their stay in the Republic. Although Paraupaba and Carapeba were unable to use their linguistic skills in the Low Countries, their experience with scouting and military intelligence gathering in Brazil may have made them useful for the Dutch army.\(^{240}\)

\(^{239}\) For evidence that Paraupaba and Carapeba were financially compensated as military officers, see ASG, SR, RRWIA, Inv. No. 4846: August 8, 1654: 107 (Paraupaba), and July 7, 1656: 217 (Carapeba). The crucial passage indicating their status as officers in these two references is the enigmatic term “twee ruijters paijen.” Although the exact meaning of this term is unknown, there is strong evidence that this refers to a financial arrangement similar to that of regular military officers. For instance, in a secret report dated to 1655 reference is made to the same term “twee ruijters paijen” in order to pay WIC officers who recently returned from Brazil. For this report, see ASG, Loketkas-Secrete Kas, Part V: Inv. No. 12582.8: Documents relating to a secret plan to capture a harbor in Brazil, n.d. (1655). I am indebted to Jaap Jacobs for suggesting that this enigmatic term refers to a payment-system similar to that of military officers in the Republic (email correspondence from Jaap Jacobs, July 19, 2002). For the advance payments to military and naval officers, see for instance H.L. Zwitzer, ‘De militie van den staat’: Het leger van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden (Amsterdam: Van Soeren & Co., 1991), 89-90; and Ronald Prud’Homme van Reine, Rechterhand van Nederland: Biografie van Michiel Adriaenszoon de Ruyter (Amsterdam: Arbeiderspers, 1996), 203.

\(^{240}\) I would like to thank Michiel de Jong for suggesting the idea that Paraupaba and Carapeba may have been used as scouts. (email correspondence September 11, 2002). For the roles of cavalry formations in early modern European armies, see Peter Wilson, “European
In April 1656, almost two years after his first remonstrance, Paraupaba again petitioned the States-General for official Dutch support on behalf of his people. As in his earlier petition, Paraupaba listed all the Portuguese abuses that the Tupis had suffered. He was especially careful to point out how loyal and steadfast Pieter Poty had been in his Protestant faith after his capture by the Portuguese in 1649. Perhaps realizing the reluctance of the States-General to finance expeditions to Brazil, Paraupaba only asked the Dutch officials for “two ships with arms and ammunition.” Once again, the States-General were unsympathetic. Most representatives opposed further spending on costly adventures in Brazil. In this respect it is revealing that the States-General also rejected a plan made by unidentified individuals in 1655 to re-occupy a strategic port in northeastern Brazil. Pressing domestic and international concerns in 1656 meant that Paraupaba’s request lingered indefinitely in some bureaucratic committee in The Hague.241

Faced with an unresponsive States-General and WIC, Paraupaba and Carapeba concluded that their diplomatic mission to the Dutch Republic had failed. Although both Tupi leaders and their families continued to be financially supported by the WIC throughout 1656, both men must have become disillusioned with their Dutch allies.

241 For Paraupaba’s second remonstrance, see Paraupaba, Twee Verscheiden Remonstrantien, 6-18. For Carapeba, see ASG, SR, RRWIA, inv. No. 4846: July 7, 1656, 217. For the official acknowledgement of this petition, see ASG, SR, Inv. No. 4846: April 6, 1656, 205. For domestic and international problems in the Dutch Republic in the mid-1650s, see Jonathan I. Israel, The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806 (The Oxford History of Early Modern Europe) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 726-738. For the plan to capture a harbor in northeastern Brazil, see ASG, Loketkas-Secrete Kas, Inv. No. 12582.8
Tragically, Paraupaba died sometime after he had registered his second remonstrance with the States-General. In October 1656, the States-General refers to Paraupaba’s wife Paulina as the “widow of the late Antonio Paraupaba who was during his life Regidoor [commander] of a Company of Brazilians in Brazil.” Paulina herself seems to have been capable of negotiating with Dutch officials because she petitioned the States-General in mid-October 1656 for continuing material support for her and her children.  

After Paraupaba’s death, his wife Paulina and Carapeba soon left the United Provinces. Unhappy with his position in a military unit somewhere in the Republic, Carapeba relocated to the Caribbean. Carapeba initially moved to the French colony of Guadeloupe sometime in the fall of 1656. While it may seem strange that Carapeba was at a French Caribbean island, it is important to realize that a number of WIC officials relocated to the Caribbean after the Dutch evacuated Brazil in January 1654. Because of their expertise in the sugar trade, these refugee colonists and officials were actively welcomed by French and English authorities respectively in Guadeloupe and Barbados to improve the cultivation of sugar on these islands. One of these refugees was Johannes Listry, the former Director of Brazilians. After he was decommissioned from WIC service, Listry began a career as sugar planter on the French colony of Guadeloupe during the early 1660s. Since Carapeba knew Listry personally from Brazil, it is possible that Carapeba followed Listry to Guadeloupe in the fall of 1656.

242 For the continuing material support for Paraupaba and Carapeba, see ASG, SR, RRWIA, Inv. No. 4846: July 7 and 12, 1656, 217. For Paraupaba’s death and Paulina’s petition, see ASG, SR, RWWIA, Inv. No. 4846: October 12, 1656, 226.

243 For Carapeba’s likely stay in Guadeloupe in the fall of 1656, see ASG, SR, Inv. No. 4846: January 5, 1657, 236. See also Extracts from Resolutions of the States-General relating to the West India Company, done in the year 1657, written by Hans Bontemantel, participant of that company, Bontemantel Collection, Dutch West India Company Papers, 1626-1834, Historical
On January 5, 1657, the States-General discussed an official petition from Carapeba, who sought to travel to the Caribbean island of Tobago, just off the Venezuela coast. A strategic island that had been alternately occupied by the Spanish, Dutch, and English since the early seventeenth century, Tobago had been claimed by the WIC in 1655. However, because the WIC was bankrupt, it had leased the island to the Lampsins brothers, who were members of a prominent mercantile family from Zeeland. Although it is unclear what Carapeba intended to do at Tobago, the WIC provided him with a small yearly salary, which indicates that he was to serve as a colonial official. Perhaps the relative close proximity of Tobago to Brazil provided Carapeba with a base from which he and maybe other Tupi refugees traveled to his former homelands in northeastern Brazil. On the other hand, because of his earlier career as intermediary in Brazil, Carapeba might have been employed as negotiator between the Dutch and the local Carib Indians of Tobago. In this respect it is interesting to note that WIC officials in the Republic refer to conflicts with Tobago Indians in 1656. Unfortunately, after his petition of January 1657, Carapeba disappears from Dutch sources.\footnote{For Carapeba’s request to go to Tobago and his subsequent salary, see ASG, SR, Inv. No. 4846: January 5, 1657, 236; and Bontemantel Collection, Dutch WIC Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Manuscript # 183, Box 1, Folder 6, 1251, No. 1. For the letter indicating Indian-Dutch conflict in Tobago, see NA, ASG, Part V: Loketkas-Seerete Kas, Inv. No. 12582.10: Letter from the Zeeland Chamber of the WIC to the States-General relating to the escape of one Cornelis Caron to the island of Tobago, February 9, 1657. For the Dutch influence on the English sugar trade in the Caribbean, see Richard S. Dunn, Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713 (New York: Norton, 1973), 60-67.}

Society of Pennsylvania, Manuscript # 183, Box 1, Folder 6, 1251, No. 1. For Listry in Guadeloupe, see Amsterdam City Archives (GAA), Notarial Archive, Inv. No. 1133: 326, June 28, 1660; Inv. No. 1137: 135v, April 30, 1661; Inv. No. 1138: 11, July 4, 1661. Listry may have been a Frenchman. For the influence of WIC officials and colonists from Brazil on the French Caribbean, see Ernst van den Boogaart, “L’essor de l’économie sucrière aux Antilles françaises (1645-1670),” in Frank Lestringant, ed. La France Amérique (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles): Actes du XXXVe colloque international d’études humanistes (Paris: Honore Champion éditeur, 1998), 275-286. For the Dutch influence on the English sugar trade in the Caribbean, see Richard S. Dunn, Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713 (New York: Norton, 1973), 60-67.
Even more enigmatic is the fate of Paulina. While Paulina received a two-month salary from authorities of the province of Holland to finance her travels, it is unknown to where she and her children traveled. Like Carapeba, Paulina might have traveled to Tobago or another Caribbean island to come closer to her Brazilian homelands, but this is mere speculation. What is clear, given Carapeba’s and Paulina’s sudden departure from the Low Countries, is that neither had any desire to stay in the United Provinces. For all their familiarity with the Dutch, Carapeba and Paulina refused to stay in the country whose authorities refused to help the Tupis in their ongoing struggle for independence from the Portuguese. At the same time, though, neither Carapeba nor Paulina is explicitly referred to as intending to return to their Tupi kinsmen. Realizing that the ongoing Tupi struggle against the Portuguese in northeastern Brazil was hopeless without Dutch support, Carapeba and Paulina likely concluded that returning to their homelands was not a viable option.

Disappointed in the lack of support from Dutch authorities and unable to go back to their own people, Carapeba and Paulina had truly become people in between. Despite his precarious position, Carapeba at least felt comfortable enough with the Dutch to join the diaspora community of former WIC officials and colonists in Guadeloupe and Tobago. Having developed extensive cross-cultural skills in his dealings with the Dutch colonization of Tobago, see Cornelis Ch. Goslinga, The Dutch in the Caribbean and the Wild Coast, 1580-1680 (Gainesville and Assen: University Press Florida and Van Gorcum Press, 1971), chapter 17. See also the three essays by Edgar Anderson on the Tobago colony of the Duke of Kurland: “Die ersten kurländischen Expeditionen nach Westindien im 17th. Jahrhundert;” “Die kurländische Kolonie Tobago I;” “Die kurländische Kolonie Tobago II;” all in Baltische Heften 8 (1961): 13-35; 129-155; 216-232. This small German colony was largely financed by Dutch merchants and operated by Dutch navigators and traders.
in Brazil, Carapeba was not afraid to start a new life for himself in the colonial societies of the Caribbean.²⁴⁵

6. Conclusion

Although the attempts of Poty and Paraupaba to secure Tupi autonomy in northeastern Brazil were ultimately unsuccessful, their long careers as mediators clearly reveal that Indians educated in Europe could emerge as intercultural mediators in their own right. Building upon their training in the Republic, Poty and Paraupaba increased their status as mediators between the Tupis and the Dutch in Brazil. Moreover, by repeatedly traveling to the Republic, Paraupaba and Carapeba showed that the mobility of peoples in the emerging Atlantic world was not only limited to Europeans or Africans, but also included Native Americans. By traveling to the Republic in the fall of 1644, Paraupaba was able to personally meet with the Heeren XIX and persuade them to give the Tupis more autonomy through a system of indirect rule. In doing so Paraupaba clearly demonstrated that some Native Americans succeeded in manipulating the European colonial system by negotiating directly with the imperial center rather than with colonial officials on the frontier. While colonial officials usually prevented indigenous leaders from directly contacting metropolitan authorities in Europe, Paraupaba successfully crossed the Atlantic to speak not only with the Heeren XIX but even with the States-General in The Hague.

The ability of Poty and Paraupaba to expand their influence as trans-Atlantic mediators and to combine dual loyalties was above all facilitated by the complicated

²⁴⁵ For Paulina, see ASG, SR, Inv. No. 4846: January 12, 1657, folio 236.
colonial frontier in northeastern Brazil. In contrast to many other colonial frontiers across the Americas, where Europeans contested native peoples over land or natural resources, in northeastern Brazil the Dutch arrived as a third actor in an already existing frontier conflict between the Portuguese and the Tupis. For many Tupis, especially the Potiguars, the Dutch invaders were therefore seen as useful military allies with whom the Tupis could drive out the Portuguese colonists and reassert Indian autonomy. Similarly, when the WIC invaded Brazil, the Dutch actively sought out military alliances with the Tupis and other Indian peoples in order to defeat the Portuguese. In addition, once the WIC had established some control over the northeast, the Dutch heavily relied on Tupi workers to support the colonial economy. Furthermore, because the Heeren XIX firmly believed that the Tupis were strategic allies who should be treated well and introduced to the tenets of Protestant Christian civilization, Poty, Paraupaba, and Carapeba were perceived as indispensable negotiators who would strengthen the Tupi-Dutch alliance.

Despite this reciprocal relationship, which provided them with material benefits and social prestige, Poty, Paraupaba, and also Carapeba remained firmly committed to their kinsmen. By protecting their people from European colonial exploitation, by continuing to participate in the communal consumption of alcohol, and above all by negotiating for Tupi autonomy with the Heeren XIX in the Republic, the two Tupi leaders clearly showed that they remained more committed to their own people than to the Recife authorities. Moreover, the strong attachment of Poty and Paraupaba to their people was also revealed by the High Council’s continuing suspicion and criticism of them. Instead of becoming privileged leaders who collaborated too closely with Dutch colonial rulers,
the three Tupi *regidors* exploited their special relationship with Company officials to
further the independence of their kinsmen.

However, as soon as the Portuguese expelled the Dutch from Brazil, the status of
Paraupaba and Carapeba as negotiators rapidly declined. Despite the eloquent pleas of
Paraupaba to the States-General in 1654 and 1656, most Dutch officials and merchants
refused to invest any more resources in a costly adventure in Brazil. Rightly fearing
execution by the Portuguese if they returned to Brazil, Paraupaba and Carapeba had now
truly become people in-between. Unable to exert any more influence among their
erstwhile Dutch allies and unwilling to go to a certain death in Brazil, Paraupaba and
Carapeba were faced with few options. Although Anthonio Paraupaba died of unknown
causes in the Republic, it is a testimony to the resilience of Carapeba that he left the
United Provinces in the continuing hope of carving out a niche for himself in the colonial
societies of the Caribbean.
CHAPTER 4

“TO PROTECT THE BRAZILIANS UNDER THEIR COMMAND”: EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC AGENTS AMONG THE BRAZILIAN INDIANS, 1635-1654

Although the Tupi Indian leaders Anthonio Paraupaba and Pieter Poty played important roles as mediators on behalf of the WIC, the group of Tupis who spoke Dutch and were trusted by the WIC government was relatively small. The High Council in Recife therefore employed a large number of European individuals as intercultural diplomats in Dutch-controlled Brazil. This chapter provides a social and cultural profile of those colonists who served as mediators between the WIC and the various native Brazilian peoples. It is important to realize that these European negotiators were not a monolithic group, but, instead, each belonged to one of five categories. These five groups were not only a reflection of the hierarchical and segmented colonial society, but they also revealed the variety of relationships between the WIC and the Indian peoples throughout northeastern Brazil. One group of intercultural diplomats was made up of mid-level colonial officials who served as supervising “Commanders of Brazilians,”

246 The quotation is taken from the High Council instructions to Jacob Pietersz Trompetter and Jan Alders in DNA, OWIC, DN, Inv. No. 68: December 4, 1637.
whereas another group of mediators consisted of poorly paid WIC soldiers who were stationed as WIC agents at the aldeias or Tupi mission villages.

A third group of negotiators was made up of Protestant Christian missionaries who attempted to convert the Indians to Dutch Calvinism. Although they were not official Company agents, their program to transform the Tupi Indians into sedentary Christian farmers closely corresponded with the WIC goal of turning Brazilian Indians into loyal Protestant allies. In addition, the ability of many Protestant ministers, lay-preachers, and schoolteachers to speak the regional Tupi language made them useful interpreters for the Company. A fourth distinct category of European mediators was that of individuals employed as liaison officers among the Tarairius in the Rio Grande province. Because the Tarairius were seen as uncontrollable “savages” by the WIC, they required special negotiators who were willing to be in close contact with them. A fifth category consisted of intercultural diplomats stationed in the frontier provinces of Ceará and Maranhão. In these provinces it was necessary to follow a delicate Indian policy because in both regions native peoples heavily outnumbered European colonists and African slaves.

Women and individuals of Indian-European descent were notably absent among these five categories of mediators. Because of religious toleration and a prosperous economic climate in the United Provinces, very few Dutch or Northwestern European families were interested in relocating to northeastern Brazil. Those Dutch women who did move to Brazil were concentrated in coastal urban centers such as Recife that were far removed from the Indian villages located in the interior. Like most of their counterparts throughout early modern Europe, Dutch women were unable to participate in politics and diplomatic affairs. Finally, while intimate relations between Indian women and Dutch men did occur
in colonial Brazil, the Dutch occupation of the northeast from 1630 to 1654 was too short to allow for the emergence of individuals of mixed Dutch-Indian descent who could function as bi-lingual interpreters or mediators.\(^{247}\)

Because these five groups of European negotiators were in frequent interaction with native peoples, transmitting official messages, exchanging gifts, converting people, or maintaining intercultural alliances, they often deliberately crossed the cultural boundaries separating Europeans from Indians in colonial Brazil. Following recent scholarship on negotiators in early North America, I will analyze whether these European intercultural diplomats, who spent so much of their time with Indians, actually closely associated with them. Although it is difficult to uncover the frames of minds of the seventeenth-century mediators, most go-betweens in WIC service remained strongly committed to their own culture. For many negotiators, the Indians were to be distrusted, exploited, and kept at arms’ length.\(^{248}\)


At the same time, this analysis of the five groups of mediators shows that this negative attitude toward Indians did not preclude close and sometimes intimate interactions. During his nearly fifteen-year long career, one prominent Commander of Brazilians showed a sincere interest in the well-being of the various Indian communities in northeastern Brazil. In addition, even though many Protestant missionaries were disappointed in the selective adoption of Dutch Calvinism by Tupi Indians, they continued to provide material aid to the native peoples after the outbreak of the Portuguese rebellion against WIC rule in 1645. While almost all European negotiators therefore remained firmly committed to their own side of the Indian-Dutch frontier, these intermediaries also showed that Europeans and Indians could closely live and work together.

1. The Commanders of Brazilians

The most influential European intercultural diplomats employed by the WIC in Brazil were those individuals who served as Commandeur van de Braziliaenen or “Commander of Brazilians.” This position, which can best be defined as that of superintendent of Indian affairs, was directly responsible for the implementation of WIC policies and directives regarding native peoples in Brazil. Despite the hierarchical organization of the Company, in which the Heeren XIX in the Republic centrally appointed all offices in its overseas territories, it was the High Council in Recife who successfully initiated the installment of a Commander or Director of Brazilians. Although it is not known when the Council appointed the first Commander of Brazilians, Joannes de Laet mentions one “Gerard Barbier” as the newly selected “Director of Brazilians” in
January, 1635. Since there is no discussion in any of the available WIC correspondence about an earlier Commander or Director, it is safe to assume that Barbier was the first individual who served in this position.\textsuperscript{249}

In addition, by January, 1635, it had become necessary for the High Council to formalize some sort of Indian policy after a large number of Tupi-speaking Indians had gone over to the WIC side. As we have seen in chapter two, when the Jesuit priest Manuel de Moraes changed loyalties in January 1635, some 1,600 Tupi Indians from the provinces of Rio Grande, Itamaracá, Paraíba, and Pernambuco accompanied him. Since De Moraes provided WIC officials with a wealth of useful information about these native peoples, such as their military strength and specific village leaders, the High Council quickly recognized the usefulness of appointing a trusted official who could supervise these Indians and persuade them to join the WIC army in its struggle against the Portuguese. After having sent the valuable but suspicious Jesuit-turncoat to their superiors in the United Provinces for further questioning, the Council consequently appointed Barbier as the new Commander of Brazilians.

The \textit{Heeren XIX} approved of Barbier’s appointment but requested that he “inform us at the earliest convenience in what ways he rules the Brazilians and in what ways he makes use of them.” While they did not specify uses for the Brazilian Indians, the WIC directors pursued an official policy of attracting the native peoples. The ordinance of 1629 declared all Brazilian Indians to be free from Iberian slavery and servitude. To recruit the valuable Indian allies to the Company, the \textit{Heeren XIX} instructed Barbier to

\textsuperscript{249} WIC correspondence most often uses the term “Commander” rather than “Director”. However, both titles were sometimes used interchangeably. Barbier is first mentioned by de S.P. L’Honoré Naber and J.C.M. Warnsinck, ed. \textit{Het Iaerlyck Verhael van Joannes de Laet, 1624-1636} (LV 40) (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1937), 139.
distribute “some small presents among their most principal and useful leaders, such as 25-30 hats and between 150 to 200 ellen coarse cloth for the most qualified and furthermore some axes, knives, scissors, cans, fishhooks, mirrors, and similar trinkets to those of lesser quality.” The Heeren XIX also urged the High Council to “restore to full freedom” any Indians that were kept as slaves by the Portuguese for having aided the Dutch expedition of Boudewijn Hendricks in Paraíba in 1625. The Heeren XIX dryly noted that it would be “unnecessary that they [the Indians] would remain as slaves under our government for which they have lost their liberty.”

Following the official approval of Barbier’s appointment by the Heeren XIX in August 1635, the office of Commander of Brazilians became the highest bureaucratic position within the colonial government concerned with Indian affairs. Throughout the Dutch occupation of northeastern Brazil, a total of nine individuals served as Commanders of Brazilians at various times. Since the High Council considered relations with Brazilian Indians to be of strategic importance, WIC officials preferred individuals who could be trusted and were loyal to the Company. Reflecting strong suspicions toward the allegiance of German, English, Scandinavian, and other European employees who made up a large majority of the colonial workforce, the Council as well as the Heeren XIX usually selected native Dutchmen for prominent administrative positions. This ethnocentric policy was not exclusive to the WIC; the Dutch East India Company also primarily appointed Dutchmen as senior officials in its outposts throughout Asia and South Africa. Ironically, the available documentation does not provide full disclosure about the ethnicity of the nine persons who have been identified as Commanders of

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250 DNA, OWIC, Inv. No. 8: Copybook of Letters sent by the Heeren XIX to the WIC Government in Recife, 1629-1642: Letter dated August 1, 1635.
Brazilians. While most of the nine names strongly suggest Dutch origins, one last name is ambiguous enough to suggest a non-Dutch background. Johannes “Listry” or “Listrij”, the name of the long-serving Commander of Brazilians from 1640 to January 1654, suggests perhaps a French background rather than a Dutch one. If Listry was a foreigner, he must have been seen as someone whose loyalty to the WIC was strong enough so as not to warrant suspicion on the part of the High Council.\(^ {251} \)

As officials who were in direct and frequent contact with the Company magistrates in Recife, the Commanders of Brazilians had to be men of some social standing in the colonial community. At the same time, the Council did not consider the position to be so prestigious that only wealthy colonists could hold it. Because the WIC government initially considered the Indians to be primarily valuable as military allies, the first three Commanders of Brazilians all had some military background. For instance, the first reference to Gerard Barbier is as a military officer commanding 200 Indians from the aldeias on a WIC campaign against the Portuguese south of Recife. Similarly, Hans Willem Louissen, Barbier’s successor, was originally a military officer, commissioned with the construction of a new fortification around Recife in the early 1630s. Finally,

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\(^ {251} \) The nine individuals who served as Commander of Brazilians were Gerard Barbier (1635), Hans Willem Louissen (1636-1637), Elto Beunigh (1638), Willem Doncker (1639-1640), Johannes Listry (1640-1654), Caspar Honinckhuysen (1645-1646), Cosmo de Moucheron (1646), Johan ten Berge (1641-1643), and Jan Hoeck (1643-1645). For the policy of the Dutch overseas trade companies to primarily appoint native Dutchmen for prominent administrative positions see Zegenrijk Gewest, 297; and Roelof van Gelder, Het Oost-Indisch avontuur: Duitsers in dienst van de VOC (1600-1800) (Nijmegen: SUN, 1997), 56. See also C.R. Boxer, The Dutch Seaborne Empire, 1600-1800 (London: Hutchinson, 1965) (Penguin reprint 1990), 89.
Lieutenant Elto Beuningh was briefly appointed as Commander of Brazilians in the province of Paraíba and the district of Gojana in February 1638.252

After the consolidation of WIC control over the coastal region of northeastern Brazil during the mid-1630s, the position of Commander of Brazilians predominately became the prerogative of mid-level officials who had experience in civil government. Of the five individuals who functioned as Commanders of Brazilians from 1640 to the WIC evacuation of northeastern Brazil in January, 1654, four simultaneously served as *schout*, an administrative function that can best be described as a sheriff responsible for both law and order in a judicial district. All four were at one time *schout* of the provinces of Itamaracá, Rio Grande or Paraíba, three provinces together contained the overwhelming majority of Tupi-speaking Indians. By primarily appointing these provincial law-enforcement officials as Commander of Brazilians, the Council revealed that by 1640 it considered Indian relations to be a matter of civilian rather than military affairs. In addition, the combination of *schout* and Commander of Brazilians meant that the WIC viewed the Tupis as people to be kept under control. Even after the outbreak of the Portuguese revolt against WIC rule in 1645 resulted in a massive mobilization of Indian troops, the High Council continued to use the *schouten* of Itamaracá, Paraíba, and Rio Grande as Commanders of Brazilians.253

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252 Barbier is mentioned in Naber and Warnsinck, ed. *Jaerlyck Verhael van Joannes de Laet*, 139. Louissen’s military status is discussed in *Nederlanders in Brazilië*, 103, note 37. On Beuningh’s rank as Lieutenant, see DNA, OWIC, DN, Inv. No. 68: February 22-23, 1638.

253 The four Commanders who were also *schout* were Johannes Listry (*schout* of Itamaracá from 1638 to 1654 (appointment in: DN, Inv. No. 68: March 26, 1638)), Caspar Honickhuysen (*schout* of Itamaracá from August 1645 to April 1646 to temporarily replace Listry who was captured at that time by the Portuguese (appointment in: DN, Inv. No. 71: December 12, 1645)), Johannes or Jan Hoeck (*schout* of Rio Grande from 1643 to 1650 (appointment in: DN Inv. No. 70: June 15, 1643)), and Johan ten Berge (*schout* of Rio Grande from 1641 to 1643.
The middling status of the office of Commander of Brazilians was also indicated by the short tenure of the only Commander who did have a more prominent status within colonial society. In February, 1639, the military officer, sugar planter, and magistrate Willem Doncker was temporarily appointed as Commander of Brazilians to replace the previously mentioned Elto Beuningh, who had been accused of corruption. However, Doncker only accepted the request of the High Council after he was given the title “Colonel” rather than “Commander.” In addition, the Recife councilors acknowledged Doncker’s demand that they would hire a new Commander of Brazilians after a period of six months. Although Doncker eventually served out his term until May 1640, his requests to serve only for half a year and to be given a more prestigious title strongly suggested that prominent colonists considered the position of Commander of Brazilians below their social status or dignity.254

Although the position of Commander of Brazilians did not appeal to the colonial elite, for many mid-level officials the rank provided one with access to a considerable income and some status. The monthly salary for the office of Commander of Brazilians
was the equivalent of that of a mid-level military officer. For instance, on November 4, 1643, the High Council offered to pay the central Commander of Brazilians Johannes Listry a salary in the amount of 100 Dutch guilders per month “plus expenses as captain.” While this monthly income was similar to that of a captain in the WIC army or the army of the United Provinces, for prominent colonists such as Doncker it was clearly below their status. When Doncker subsequently negotiated his salary with the High Council in early February, 1639, he only agreed to serve as Commander of Brazilians after the Recife government promised him to pay 200 guilders per month, “plus rations for the rank of Sergeant-Major.”

That the office of Commander of Brazilians required extensive and regular contact with Brazilian Indians clearly diminished its appeal to the colonial elite. Although the surviving WIC correspondence does not contain a formal description or definition of the Commanders, the available documents allow for a good reconstruction of their main duties. In the period following the inauguration of the new position in 1635, the Commander was primarily occupied with bringing Tupi Indian warriors to join WIC military campaigns against the Portuguese. For instance, on December 13, 1635, Hans

255 Listry’s monthly salary is discussed in DN, Inv. No. 70: November 4, 1643. For Doncker’s salary, see DN, Inv. No. 68: February 3, 1639. For a discussion of salary-scales in New Netherland, see Zegenrijk Gewest, 293-294. The salaries of WIC officials and employees in New Netherland seem to have been generally lower than that of their counterparts in Brazil. For instance, the highest military officer in New Netherland received only 60 guilders per month in 1644 whereas a WIC Captain in Brazil received 100 guilders per month on the average during the same period. Most likely the discrepancy was caused by the ongoing inflation of prices in northeastern Brazil that were themselves caused by the continuing costs of financing the WIC occupation. The monthly income of captains in the army of the United Provinces is estimated to have been 150 guilders in 1599 as well as in 1666. Presumably the pay in the official Dutch army was better than that of the WIC which was a trade company after all. See H.L. Zwitzer, ‘De militie van den Staat’: Het leger van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden (Amsterdam: Van Soeren, 1991), 201, table II-d. The monthly income of Reformed ministers employed by the WIC in Brazil was also equivalent to that of military captains. See Reformed Church, 104.
Willem Louissen, the newly appointed Commander of Brazilians, arrived in Recife from the island of Itamaracá with 190 Tupis who were to be deployed in an upcoming military expedition. Upon his arrival, the High Council provided Louissen with forty guilders with which he had to buy “fifty hats and five pairs of shoes” to distribute among the Tupi headmen and prominent war-leaders.256

After the WIC had established firm military control over most parts of northeastern Brazil in the late 1630s, the tasks of the Commanders became much more centered on the civic administration of the Tupi Indian population. As we have seen, the Heeren XIX and the High Council from the beginning of the invasion of Brazil in 1630 wanted to attract as many Brazilian Indians to their side as possible. Their reasons were primarily military, but they also wanted to turn their Indian allies into an orderly and docile Christian population. One of the most significant duties of the Commanders was therefore to concentrate the Tupi-speaking Indians into the formerly Jesuit mission villages.

The Commander became charged with the central administration of the aldeias. While most mission villages were located in the provinces of Paraíba, Itamaracá, and Rio Grande, some communities were also to be found in Pernambuco. Since it was impossible for one person to maintain effective control of all the aldeias throughout northeastern Brazil, the Commander of Brazilians, with the approval of the High Council, personally appointed both European and Tupi individuals as aldeia commanders or “captains.” These aldeia captains were instructed to execute the orders from the

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256 Louissen’s arrival in Recife and the instructions for gift-giving can be found in DN, Inv. No. 68: December 13, 1635.
Commander and the Council such as mobilizing Indian troops and laborers. In return, the Commander supplied these captains with monthly monetary compensation.

While the Tupi captains have been discussed in a previous chapter, and the European aldeia captains will be discussed later in this chapter, it is important to note here that the Commander of Brazilians was also authorized to replace any incompetent European or Indian captains with more capable persons. For instance, after Listry was informed by the schout of Rio Grande, Johan ten Berge, in June, 1641, that many European aldeia captains had abused their positions to enrich themselves at the expense of the Indians, the Commander ordered the resignation of the “Dutch Captains of the Aldeen,” in Rio Grande and allowed the “Brazilians under the command of the same Listry to be governed from now on by persons of their own nation, who will treat them better and who will pay more consideration to the well-being of the Aldeas.”

In addition to relegating the local administration of the mission villages to the aldeia captains, the Commander also employed a particular provincial official. This position, which was usually referred to as “Captain-Major” to signify the subordination of this rank to the superior Commander of Brazilians, was predominantly used in Rio Grande where most aldeias were located. On the above-mentioned meeting of June 26, 1641, Commander Johannes Listry nominated schout Johan ten Berge for the rank of Captain-Major of the Rio Grande aldeia Indians. The individual appointed for this position was not only responsible for the supervision of the aldeias in this province but also for maintaining diplomatic relations with the Tarairius of “King” Nhanduí, whose homelands were located in the interior of Rio Grande. Because of their military

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257 For the meeting of June 26, 1641 and the rank and title, see DN, Inv. No. 69: June 26, 1641.
usefulness as well as their willingness to harass peaceful Portuguese colonists, the “Captain-Major over the Brazilians in the Capitanie [captaincy] of Rio Grande” was also required to meet frequently with Nhandui or his envoys. In addition to Rio Grande, other provinces also sometimes had regional Commanders. For instance, Caspar Honinckhuysen served as the Commander of Brazilians in the island-province of Itamaracá, from August, 1645, till his violent death at the hands of Portuguese rebels in the spring of 1646.258

Despite the system of *aldeia* captains and mid-level officials, the Commander occasionally visited the mission villages himself to inspect the progress of the missionization program and to report on the general conditions of the Tupi population. During the summer months of 1641 Johannes Listry made an extensive tour of all the *aldeias* in Rio Grande. Following this inspection Listry supplied a written report with policy recommendations to the High Council. These recommendations varied from the need to appoint a minister and schoolteacher among the “innocent and brutish” Rio Grande Indians to the request to provide a bell to the Calvinist church of one of the *aldeias*. In addition to these inspection tours, the Commander also held frequent meetings with Calvinist ministers to coordinate the missionary program among the Tupis. After his tour of the Rio Grande *aldeias*, Listry called upon the Classis of Brazil (the Dutch Calvinist church organization), to supply the Rio Grande Indians with an experienced Protestant minister who could instruct the Tupis in the Reformed religion. Just how much

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258 The appointment of Johan ten Berge is mentioned in DN, Inv. No. 69: June 26, 1641. Johannes or Jan Hoeck, the successor of Ten Berge, was constantly preoccupied with diplomatic meetings with Nhandui and his Tarairius in 1644 and 1645. For his appointment see DN, Inv. No. 70: June 15, 1643. For meetings with the Tarairius, see DN, Inv. No. 70: October 18, 31, December 2, 1644, and January 23, February 24, 1645.
the Commander was expected to regulate life in the *aldeias* was revealed at Listry’s report before the Council in Recife on February 17, 1642. Listry told of the dramatic depopulation of the *aldeias* due to both a smallpox epidemic and to a costly military campaign. He also raised an issue that goes to the heart of family life. Should the children of Indian women and European or African men remain in the *aldeias* with their mothers, or should they be placed in colonial society, to be employed as a cheap labor force? The Council decided, for the time being, that mothers could keep their children. But it mooted the possibility of a future boarding school.259

Keeping a close eye on the *aldeias*, the Commander had to recruit Tupi soldiers when the Council needed them. For instance, in February 1639, the WIC government ordered the newly-appointed “Colonel of Brazilians,” Willem Doncker, to mobilize 600 *aldeia* Indians as soon as possible following news about the impending, massive, Spanish-Portuguese invasion. Similarly, in November 1642 Johannes Listry received orders from the WIC government to select “60 of the most courageous Brazilians from all the *aldeias*” to help WIC soldiers pursue elusive Portuguese guerillas.260

Charged with mobilizing Indian soldiers, the Commanders also ordered Indian labor. They supervised the system in which private colonists temporarily hired Indian men and women for various labor-duties on the sugar plantations. Realizing that the

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259 The report of Listry’s inspection trip to the “innocent and brutish” Rio Grande Indians in the summer of 1641 is discussed by the High Council in DN, Inv. No. 69: September 23, 1641. On Listry’s request for a missionary among the Rio Grande Indians, see Grothe, October 17, 1641, session 7, point 7, 306; and DN, Inv. No. 69: October 31, 1641. The February 1642 meeting is described in DN, Inv. No. 69: February 17, 1642.

260 On the request to Willem Doncker, see DN, Inv. No. 68: February 7, 1639. For the invasion of the Spanish-Portuguese invasion force in 1639 see *Dutch in Brazil*, 88-90. For the instructions to Listry, see DN, Inv. No. 69: November 10, 1642.
valuable Portuguese sugar mill owners who had accepted WIC rule were accustomed to employing indigenous laborers as hunters, cooks, and cart-drivers on their plantations, the High Council tolerated the hiring of aldeia workers, as long as the Indians were adequately paid and not enslaved. Some of the Commanders were very closely involved. In early July, 1642, Johan ten Berge, the “Captain-Major” of the Indians in Rio Grande, held a council with all the aldeia leaders of that province in order to discuss the employment of Indian laborers. He gained detailed knowledge of the trade goods the Indians wished to have in return for their services. Some Commanders of Brazilians were more interested in furthering their own schemes. In early 1639 the High Council fired Commander Elto Beuningh after they received several complaints from both WIC officials and Indians regarding his exploitation of aldeia residents.261

The influential position of the Commander did not structurally change after the High Council authorized the implementation of the system of indirect rule on behalf of the aldeia population in the spring of 1645. As we have seen in an earlier chapter, after a remarkable visit of Anthonio Paraupaba to the Heeren XIX in the fall of 1644, the WIC directors instructed the High Council to devise an administrative organization in which the Tupi Indians would be able to govern and administer justice over themselves. However, after three Indian schepenbanken or High and judicial districts were officially set up in late March 1645 to provide a large degree of autonomy to the aldeia population, the High Council still required that any decision made by the native regidors or senior

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261 Ten Berge’s meeting is discussed in LPB, Inv. No. 57: Letter from Evert Smient in Rio Grande to the WIC Government in Recife, July 12, 1642. The affair of Beuningh is discussed in LPB, Inv. No. 54: Missive from the WIC Government in Recife to the Heeren XIX, March 5, 1639. See also DN, Inv. No. 68: November 6 and December 31, 1638.
magistrates of the three Indian districts had to be discussed first with Commander Listry.262

After the Portuguese revolt of the summer of 1645 prematurely terminated the experiment in Indian indirect rule, the main task of the Commander of Brazilians revolved once again around the mobilization of Indian troops for the military defense of northeastern Brazil. Immediately following the outbreak of the Portuguese rebellion in June, the High Council ordered Johannes Listry to personally lead “three hundred of the most brave Brazilians” against the Portuguese rebels. Similarly, in mid-December 1647 Listry was asked by the High Council to detail the number of available Indian troops and the nature of their weapons. Likewise, in November 1645 Johannes Hoeck, the Captain-Major of the Indians of Rio Grande cooperated with Anthonio Paraupaba to assemble a force of some 160 WIC soldiers and 200 Indian warriors that was employed to track down Portuguese guerillas in Rio Grande.263

Another major assignment of the Commander during the period of the Portuguese rebellion against WIC rule from 1645 to 1654 was securing adequate clothing and food supplies for the *aldeia* Indian elders, women, and children who had sought refuge from the Portuguese in the vicinity of WIC forts along the coast. Throughout the late 1640s and early 1650s Listry and the High Council frequently corresponded with each other.

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262 The origins of the Indian *schepenbanken* has been discussed in chapter 3. See also *Reformed Church*, 202-204. For the role of Listry in the system of the three Indian *schepenbanken*, see LPB, Inv. No. 60: General Missive from the WIC Government to the *Heeren XIX*, June 27, 1645.

263 DN, Inv. No. 60: General Missive from the WIC Government in Recife to the *Heeren XIX*, June 27, 1645 (Listry ordered to mobilize brave Brazilians); DN, Inv. No. 72: December 13, 1647 (Listry instructed to make list of Indian troops); DN, Inv. No.71: November 22, 1645 (Hoeck and Paraupaba).
regarding the physical well being of the aldeia refugees. In late October 1647 Listry personally distributed a large amount of Osnabruck linen to a group of unidentified “poor and dispirited Brazilians”. Similarly, in April 1652 Listry reported to the High Council that the Indians assembled at the island of Itamaracá were hungry after a dry season. Listry successfully petitioned the High Council to distribute food among the native families at Itamaracá from supplies in the WIC warehouse.\footnote{GAA, ACA, No. 379, Inv. No. 212: List of Cloth distributed to the Brazilian Indians, October 1647, folios 125-126. See DN, Inv. No. 75: April 30, 1652 for the Indian refugees at Itamaracá given food from the WIC warehouse by Listry. For correspondence between Listry and the High Council regarding the plight of the aldeia refugees see DN, Inv. No. 72: January 2, 5; May 6; September 16, all in 1648; DN, Inv. No. 75: March 17, November 8, both in 1651.}

Although the nine individuals who served as Commanders of Brazilians regularly interacted with native peoples in war and peacetime, none of them extensively intermingled or closely identified with the Indians. Significantly, none of the Commanders of Brazilians ever resided among the Indians. As far as we know, they all lived in colonial communities and only visited the aldeias when necessary. There is also no record showing that any of the Commanders of Brazilians ever adopted Indian dress or facial decorations during their visits to the Indian villages. In addition, despite their frequent encounters with Indians, there is no indication that any of them ever established an intimate relationship with a native woman. On the contrary, the available documentary evidence strongly indicates that all the Commanders fulfilled their duties as professional colonial officials loyal to the High Council rather than as idealists either who were captivated by Indian culture or who wanted to promote the inclusion of Indians into colonial society.\footnote{Obviously this paragraph is based on negative or non-existing evidence. However, since the High Council actively discouraged Indian-European intermarriages and wrote about it in}
The Commanders of Brazilians were clearly more interested in gaining social respectability and mobility within the colonial community than in establishing a good reputation among the Indians. For instance, four of the nine Commanders of Brazilians combined their roles as superintendents of Indian affairs with their position as provincial schout or sheriff. By appointing local enforcers of the WIC law as intercultural diplomats the High Council clearly indicated that it viewed the aldeia Indians as a population that was to be controlled rather than treated as autonomous.

Some Commanders spent considerable time and money in becoming prominent plantation owners. During his brief tenure as Commander, from November 1636 to October 1637, Hans Willem Louissen bought not one but two engenhos or sugar mills on credit from the High Council in May, 1637, for the considerable amount of 70,000 guilders. This enormous investment by an individual who had only an average monthly income of 100 guilders clearly reveals that Louissen’s high ambitions to join the colonial planter elite exceeded his interest in succeeding as an intercultural diplomat. Similarly, in February 21, 1642, the High Council officially sold a piece of land along the Capioribi River in the district of Gojana to the Commander of Brazilians Johannes Listry for no less than 4,000 guilders. Indicative of Listry’s intention to utilize this land for commercial agricultural purposes was that the High Council also sold Listry African slaves to the value of 500 guilders. Finally, in 1649, Listry was mentioned as having a manioc-plantation on the island of Itamaracá. The High Council had promoted the private cultivation of manioc on Itamaracá in order to secure a steady food supply for WIC.

its correspondence when it occurred, it is relatively safe to say that the Commanders of Brazilians did not establish intimate relations with native women. For the attitude of the High Council towards Indian-European intermarriage see Nederlanders in Brazilië, 216.
personnel as well as the Indian allies and African slaves of the WIC. Although the cultivation of manioc proved eventually unsuccessful, Listry’s ongoing preoccupation with potentially lucrative agricultural projects showed that his work as Commander of Brazilians was only one of his many occupations.266

Nevertheless, for all their status-seeking within colonial society and for all their unwillingness to adopt native customs and marry Indian women, some Commanders of Brazilians were sincerely interested in the plight of the aldeia population. This was especially the case with Johannes Listry. While most of his predecessors served for a period of only one or at the most two years, Listry served as Commander of Brazilians from 1640 to January 1654. Although he strongly supported the vision of the High Council and the Classis of Brazil that the Indians had to be closely supervised while they were transformed into loyal Protestant Christian farmers and soldiers, Listry’s exceptionally long tenure of fourteen years suggest that he also must have been personally interested in the duties as Indian superintendent. After all, the position of Commander was not seen as a very prestigious one among the colonists and the salary was limited to that of a captain in the military.

Unfortunately, in the absence of personal writings by and about Listry, it remains difficult to explain why he continued his work as Commander for such a long period. Perhaps Listry increasingly considered it his moral duty to lead the aldeia Indians to the

266 The transaction between Louissen and the High Council regarding the two sugar mills can be found in DN, Inv. No. 68: May 30, 1637. The sugar mills had originally belonged to a Portuguese colonist. For Listry buying the piece of land in Gojana see DN, Inv. No. 69: February 21, 1642. Listry’s manioc plantation on Itamaracá is discussed in Nederlanders in Brazilië, 152. In this respect it is interesting to note that after the fall of Dutch Brazil in January 1654 Listry became a private planter on the French Caribbean colony of Guadeloupe during the late 1650s and early 1660s. For this see GAA, NA, Inv. No. 980: folio 205: October 10, 1656; Inv. No. 2433 (b): folio 40v-41: October 13, 1656; Inv. No. 1154, folio 320: October 7, 1665.
path of Christian civilization. In this respect it is significant to note that Listry personally requested the High Council in early November 1643 not to compensate him financially for his work as Commander. Although he asked the Recife government in early March 1644 to reinstate his regular salary in the face of financial problems, Listry’s unusual demand to not be paid for his work as intercultural diplomat reveals that he considered his work as more than a professional duty.

Similarly, Listry’s ongoing commitment to the distribution of clothing and food among the Indian refugees on Itamaracá Island after the outbreak of the Portuguese revolt in 1645 showed that he viewed the *aldeia* Indians as more than “innocent and brutish” natives. Listry fought beside Brazilian troops against the Portuguese in the summer of 1645. Even a temporary captivity by the Portuguese from late August 1645 to early 1646 did not end his career as intercultural diplomat. On the contrary, soon after he was exchanged for Portuguese captives held by the Dutch, Listry was reinstated as Commander of Brazilians in March 1647. After the WIC position in northeastern Brazil became even weaker during the early 1650s, Listry remained dedicated to his work as Commander. On December 15, 1653, several weeks before the official WIC surrender to the Portuguese in Recife, Listry was still involved with keeping the Indians loyal to the Company by distributing gifts among the Rio Grande Tarairius. Although we will probably never know why Listry acted the way he did, his remarkably long career as superintendent of Indian affairs strongly suggests that not every Commander of Brazilians was a bureaucratic official disinterested in the plight of the Indians.\(^{267}\)

\(^{267}\) On Listry’s request not to be paid for his services as Commander of Brazilians, see DN, Inv. No. 70: November 4, 1643. For Listry’s captivity and reinstatement, see *Nederlanders in Brazilië*, 213. Listry was captured Interestingly, in the same daily minute the High Council discussed a request from Listry to be given the right to build a sugar mill on his land in Gojana.
2. The Aldeia Captains

_Aldeia_ sergeants and captains formed the second group of Europeans who functioned as intercultural diplomats. Although the documents are incomplete, I have identified a total of 35 individuals that fit into this category. The High Council in Recife appointed the first _aldeia_ officers in the spring of 1636 following the stabilization of WIC rule in northeastern Brazil. The earliest reference to these officials is to be found in the Daily Minute for July 25, 1637 where the WIC government financially compensated a group of nine European “sergeants of the Brazilians”. Some of these individuals, such as Simon Daniels, had served in this capacity since May 1636. Although no documents have survived that discuss the creation of this new post, it is very likely that the High Council realized that the Commander needed assistants in the supervision of numerous and widely scattered Indian villages. During the tenure of the energetic and ambitious Governor Johan Maurits (January 1637-May 1644), the system of European _aldeia_ officers became part of Maurits’ attempt to restructure the often chaotic and corrupt WIC administration in Brazil. By placing European officials among the _aldeias_ Maurits and the High Council could not only mobilize the valuable Indian allies more effectively but could also protect the Indians better from abuse by colonists. In addition, through these diplomatic agents the Recife government was also able to keep better control over the native population.268

This request seems unrelated to his demand to not to be compensated for his work as Commander. For Listry’s request to be paid again, see DN, Inv. No. 70: March 8, 1644. On the last years of the Dutch in Brazil see _Dutch in Brazil_, chapter 6. On Listry’s distribution of presents to the Tarairius in 1653, see DNA, First Section, Hof van Holland, Criminal Papers, Inv. No. 5252: Papers Regarding the Surrender of Brazil, 1654: DN, December 15, 1653. The WIC diplomats among the Tarairius will be discussed in section IV of this chapter.

268 The reference to the nine “sergeanten of Brazilians” can be found in DN, Inv. No. 68: July 25, 1637. For Maurits’ appointment and program to restructure the WIC government in Brazil see _Dutch in Brazil_, chapter 3.
Because the Company government was primarily interested in employing the Indians as auxiliary forces against the Habsburg enemy, the main tasks of the aldeia officers were associated with the recruitment and commanding of native troops on military campaigns. Recife therefore frequently referred to European and Indian aldeia captains who had accompanied a company of “Brazilians” on an expedition. Whenever Maurits and the High Council were organizing a major attack on Iberian positions or strongholds, the aldeia captains were instructed directly or through their Commanders to mobilize a certain number of native troops to support the army. During the WIC conquest of the province of Sergipe del Rey in the fall of 1637, Maurits and the High Council called upon several aldeia captains to provide military support. After the successful completion of the campaign, Recife demobilized the Indian troops and provided the aldeia captains with goods to distribute among them. On January 30, 1638, the Recife government instructed the commissary of goods, Johannes Engelbrecht, to supply captains Willem Vos and Reynier Ments with considerable amounts of cloth and linen. Vos had to hand out these goods to 78 Indian men and 29 native women; Ments received similar items to allocate among 62 men and 29 women who had participated in the Sergippe del Rey expedition for a period of three months.269

Maurits and the High Council also employed the aldeia captains as suppliers of temporary native labor. After his arrival in Brazil in early 1637 Maurits especially

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269 DN, Inv. No. 68: January 30, 1638. The WIC government also compensated a company of Indian troops led by Pieter Poty. The total expenses for the three companies of Poty, Ments, and Vos amounted to 1240 guilders. Because the aldeia Indians preferred material goods over money the WIC government preferred to pay them in linen and cloth, also because there was a continuing shortage of money in Brazil. The Indian women were primarily used as providers of food on campaigns. On the conquest of Sergipe del Rey see Dutch in Brazil, 85.
attempted to rebuild the vitally important sugar sector that had been heavily damaged
during the heavy fighting in northeastern Brazil since 1630. Although the European
planters predominantly relied on imported African slave labor, Indians remained
important for a variety of economic duties. Governor Maurits and the Councilors Mathias
van Ceulen and Adriaen van der Dussen in January 1638 reported that the Indian workers
were primarily used for “the cutting of firewood for the Ingenhos [sugar mills], the
planting of sugar cane plants and the cleaning of cane fields, and for the driving of carts,
and the tending of livestock.” Indigenous labor also continued to be valuable because
many African slaves had found, in the chaos brought about by the WIC invasion, a
chance to escape from the sugar mills and to seek refuge in the Brazilian interior. Finally,
Indians were also used for the cutting and collecting of brazilwood, a valuable tree that
was used as a dye in the European textile industry. But the WIC government wanted to
keep the Indians from being enslaved by the Portuguese or other European sugar mill
owners because the Dutch needed the natives as military allies.270

The aldeia captains therefore had both to provide Indian workers to European
planters and to ensure that these native laborers were adequately paid and not abused by

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270 For WIC policies and the sugar sector see Nederlanders in Brazilie, chapter 2. See
also E. van den Boogaart, “De Nederlandse expansie in het Atlantische gebied, 1590-1674,” in E.
van den Boogaart and M.A.P. Meilink-Roelofsz, eds., Overzee: Nederlandse koloniale
geschiedenis, 1590-1975 (Haarlem: Fibula-Van Dishoeck, 1982), 121-124. The tasks given to
Indian laborers on sugar plantations is discussed in the report written by Johan Maurits and the
councilors Adriaen van der Dussen and Mathias van Ceulen in January 1638 entitled “Sommier
Discours over den Staet van de Vier Geconquesteerde Capitanias Parnambuco, Itamarica,
Paraiba, ende Rio Grande inde Noorderdelen van Brasil.” The original report is located at LPB,
Inv. No. 53. A transcription of the report can be found in Bijdragen en Mededeelingen van het
Historisch Genootschap (Gevestigd te Utrecht) 2 (1879): 257-317. The quotation about the Indian
work-tasks can be found on pages 290-291. For the trade in brazilwood in Dutch-controlled
Brazil see Nederlanders in Brazilië, 147. For the role of Indians in the brazilwood-trade in
general, see James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz, Early Latin America: A History of Colonial
Spanish America and Brazil (Cambridge Latin American Studies 46), (New York: Cambridge
the colonists. In December 1637 the Rio Grande aldeia captains Jacob Pietersz Trompetter and Jan Alders received official instructions from the government “to protect the Brazilians under their command, and to take care, that their manioc-fields always have to be well-planted, and that the same [the Indians] are not being forced to work at Ingenhos [sugar mills] or among other colonists against their free will, and if they let themselves be persuaded [to work] that they will receive for wages and compensation the customary amounts of cloth.” Johan Listry and the WIC government in February 1642 issued similar directives for aldeia officers to promote the cultivation of self-sustaining manioc crops in the mission villages and to prevent the Indians from being exploited by the senhores de ingenhos (sugar mill owners).271

Although the aldeia officers were thus required to fulfill not only military tasks but also economic ones, the WIC recruited these individuals primarily from the ranks of its soldiers and subaltern officers, such as corporals and candidate-officers. Because the Recife magistrates frequently mobilized Indians as warriors, guides, carriers, and providers of food to accompany military units of the army during field campaigns, the government logically preferred to appoint soldiers as liaisons between the army commanders and the aldeia communities. Despite their strategic role as cross-cultural negotiators who brought two cultures closer together, the European aldeia commanders did not carry much prestige. Although their rank was referred to as aldeia sergeants or captains, they were paid little more than privates or corporals in the regular WIC army. For instance, Maurits and the High Council only paid the nine “sergeants of the

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271 The instructions to Trompetter and Van Ham are discussed in DN, Inv. No. 68: December 4, 1637. For the directives in February 1642, see DN, Inv. No. 69: February 17, 1642, point 3.
Brazilians” six guilders per month in July 1637, an amount that was equivalent to that of the average monthly salary of foot-soldiers in the WIC and Dutch East India Company (VOC).272

In 1642, the year for which we have most information about the salaries of the aldeia captains, Maurits and the High Council paid them a monthly salary that varied from 15 to 18 guilders. In addition, the aldeia captains were provided with an annual stipend to cover expenses such as clothes and equipment. Although this income was obviously more substantial than that of a private, it was well below that of regular army captains, who earned on the average between 80 and 100 guilders per month.273

The status held by the European aldeia officers is especially revealed by the higher salaries of the Indian village captains. Whereas European aldeia captains in August 1642 only received 18 guilders per month, Indian aldeia captains who participated in WIC military campaigns during the late 1630s and early 1640s were regularly paid 30 guilders per month. The native community leaders most likely received a more impressive income than their European counterparts because Maurits and the High Council hoped to strengthen the allegiance of native leaders to the WIC. In addition, since the European aldeia captains were ordinary soldiers recruited from the lowest social classes, the colonial elite in Recife did not feel obligated to pay them as their native counterparts. The WIC also recognized the Tupi headmen as having a high status in their own societies, and thus rewarded them as men of rank and high status. Finally, the Tupi

272 For the payments to the “sergeants of Brazilians”, see DN, Inv. No. 68, July 25, 1637. For the salaries to WIC soldiers in New Netherland, see Zegenrijk Gewest, 74, 294. For the salary scale for soldiers in VOC service, see Van Gelder, Oost-Indisch avontuur, 179.

273 For the monthly income of the aldeia captains, see DN, Inv. No. 69: August 28, 1642 (15 guilders per month), and October 21, 1642 (18 guilders per month).
leaders were also expected by the High Council to redistribute their earnings among their kinsmen.\textsuperscript{274}

Because all the European \textit{aldeia} officials were also WIC soldiers or lower officers, the ethnic diversity of these intercultural diplomats was initially a reflection of that of the WIC army. Like the WIC army in New Netherland and the army of the VOC in Asia, probably more than half of all WIC soldiers in Brazil were of English, German, Scottish, Scandinavian or other European origin. Although the surviving WIC correspondence related to Brazil rarely provides full disclosure about the ethnic or national background of its personnel, several non-Dutch individuals can be identified as having served as \textit{aldeia} officers. For example, in the spring of 1637 one “Henri Huyn of Nancy” was mentioned as a “sergeant of the Brazilians” who had accompanied a group of 35 Indian men and 40 native women during a campaign of the WIC army. Similarly, in 1638 a soldier with the English-sounding name Morgan Thomas served as a captain of an \textit{aldeia} south of Recife.\textsuperscript{275}

However, by the late 1630s the Company authorities had resolved to exclude European foreigners from the post of \textit{aldeia} officer. Writing about the system of Indian mission villages in 1639, Adriaen van der Dussen, a member of the High Council, reported, “in every Aldea have been placed \textit{Dutch} Captains who rule over them and their

\textsuperscript{274} For examples of payments of 30 guilders per month to Indian captains, see DN, Inv. No. 68: February 23, 1638 and February 6, 1639; Inv. No. 69: February 20, 1642.

\textsuperscript{275} On the large numbers of foreigners in the WIC army in New Netherland, see \textit{Zegenrijk Gewest}, 74. For the large majority of foreigners in the VOC army, see Van Gelder, \textit{Oost-Indisch avontuur}, 53-55. See also Boxer, \textit{Dutch Seaborne Empire}, 88-93. Two prominent military commanders of the WIC in Brazil were from Germany and Poland. See \textit{Dutch in Brazil}, 53. For Henri Huyn of Nancy, see DN, Inv. No. 68: May 5 and 8, 1637. For Morgan Thomas, see DN, Inv. No. 68: April 16, June 18, October 12, 1638.
principal leaders.” [my emphasis] In late June 1641 Listry advised Maurits and the Council to fire the “Dutch Captains of the aldeias” [my emphasis] in the province of Rio Grande after having received complaints from the Rio Grande schout Johan ten Berge about “how the persons that are captains over the Aldeias of the Brazilians are only interested in using their Brazilians for their own private use.” The WIC government decided to replace these corrupt Dutch aldeia officers with “persons of their own nation, who will treat their own people better, and who will better provide for the general well-being of the Aldeias.” Maurits and the Council probably adopted the policy of appointing only Dutchmen or Indians as aldeia officers, because they had concluded by the late 1630s that the position was strategic enough to warrant the exclusion of potentially untrustworthy foreigners. As we have seen, the WIC authorities pursued a similar policy of hiring predominately Dutchmen for the post of Commander of Brazilians. Furthermore, the WIC government might have waited to enact this policy because the military situation in northeastern Brazil remained unstable until the early 1640s.276

By 1642 Listry had already concluded that the Dutch could not rely solely upon native aldeia captains. According to the report submitted by Listry to Maurits and the High Council in that month, “Among our Brazilian officers in the Aldeias we find daily great disorder, because they work more on behalf of their own people, [they] don’t do

276 Adriaen van der Dussen, “Rapport van den Staet van de Geconquesteerde Landen van Brasil gedaen ter vergaderinge van hare Edele de Gecommitteerde Heeren, ter vergadering der XIX door Adriaen vander Dussen, Hooge ende Secreten Raet in Brasil, 1639,” Dutch Royal Family Archive, The Hague, The Netherlands, Archive of Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen, Brazilian Affairs, Inv. No. A-4-1454, 59. This document was published in a Portuguese translation by J.A.G. de Mello as Relatório sobre as capitanias conquistadas no Brasil pelos holandeses (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto do Açucar e do Álcool, 1947). For Listry’s comments, see DN, Inv. No. 69: June 26, 1641. For the military situation in Brazil during the late 1630s and early 1640s see Dutch in Brazil, chapter 3.
any work except brewing strong drinks, and therefore do not have any authority over each other.” Moreover, the Indian aldeia captains allowed colonists to exploit natives as a cheap labor force by keeping Indian workers for “several months without notifying anyone of it.” Disappointed in the Brazilian aldeia captains, Listry requested Maurits and the High Council “to appoint in every Aldeia a Dutchman to take care of the daily affairs.” The WIC government responded favorably to this request and instructed Listry “to look for married Dutchmen who are of a mature age and are capable to serve at an Aldeia.”

Because Recife was preoccupied with the making of a truce with the Portuguese during the spring and summer of 1642, the new resolutions were not immediately implemented. Listry again petitioned Maurits and the High Council in late August 1642 and informed them that it was “of utmost importance that in every aldeia should be appointed a Dutch captain of marital status and of good reputation.” The government accepted Listry’s proposal and instructed him to appoint a “good Sergeant married with wife and children” as officer in each aldeia. Although they did not make a reference to the ethnicity of the “good Sergeant”, it is likely that Maurits and the Council assumed that Dutchmen would be preferred. After all, the WIC government had that February supported Listry’s request to appoint only “married Dutchmen.”

The predilection for native Dutchmen over other Europeans is revealed by the absence of many non-Dutch names among the aldeia officers after 1642. One of the few exceptions was the Danish-German corporal Peter Hansen Hajstrup who was frequently

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277 DN, Inv. No. 69: February 17, 1642.

278 DN, Inv. No. 69: August 28, 1642.
dispatched by the WIC government during the late 1640s and early 1650s to carry instructions to Indian leaders loyal to the WIC. However, by the time Hajstrup was active in Brazil, the aldeia system had effectively collapsed. Furthermore, Hajstrup never stayed at a mission village for long, for he was primarily a messenger.279

As the frequent official references to “married Dutchmen” who were “of good reputation” make clear, the authorities were worried about the marital status and moral character of the aldeia officers. Since the lower ranks of the WIC army, from which these officers were recruited, were mostly made up of young, single, poor, and illiterate men, so too the European intercultural diplomats stationed at the mission villages. The colonial elite in Recife, which looked down upon the lower classes of soldiers, sailors, and unskilled laborers, was consequently worried that the uneducated and poor young men would abuse their position as aldeia officers and endanger the strategic alliance with the Indians.280

The WIC government also feared that ill-disciplined young single men would endanger the hierarchical colonial order by forming liaisons with native women. Because the Protestant colonial elite in Dutch Brazil viewed mulattoes and mestizos as uncivilized and immoral, WIC officials attempted to prevent the mixing of their soldiers and

279 For Hajstrup see Frank Ilbold, Jens Jäger, and Detlev Kraack, eds. Das "Memorial und Jurenal" des Peter Hansen Hajstrup (1624-1672) (Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins 103) (Neumünster: Wachholtz Verlag, 1995). Hajstrup was a German speaking farmers’ son from the German-Danish border region who kept a diary-notebook from his service as a WIC soldier in Brazil.

280 Although there is not yet a study about the demographic and social makeup of the WIC army in Brazil, it is very likely that it was the same as that of the WIC army in New Netherland and the army of the VOC in Asia. For a social profile of these armies, see respectively Zegenrijk Gewest, 72-76, and Van Gelder, Oost-Indisch avontuur, 53-56. See also Boxer, Dutch Seaborne Empire, 88-93.
employees with Indian and African women. The available correspondence does not supply much evidence about intimate relations between *aldeia* captains and Brazilian Indians during the 1630s and 1640s, but it is clear from the concerns of WIC officials in 1641 and 1642 that they must have occurred. At least one Dutch soldier established a long-term liaison with a “Brazilian” woman. On August 28, 1642, Maurits and the High Council accepted the nomination of the Dutchman “Jacob Kint, who has married a Brazilian woman, as commander over the Tapuyas and Brazilians” in the district of Gojana nearby Paraíba. Perhaps, since this was a formal marriage, the Council was willing to accept Kint’s appointment.281

Another obvious but important criteria that the government considered in selecting *aldeia* officers regarded the ability to communicate effectively with the Indians in the mission villages. Although the WIC documents do not frequently provide details about the communication between the *aldeia* officers and the Indians, a few examples indicate that the WIC officials preferred to appoint persons who spoke a language that

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281 On the attitude of the colonial elite in Dutch Brazil toward the mulattoes and mestizos see E. van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies: The Dutch West India Company and the Tarairius, 1631-1654,” in: E. van den Boogaart, ed. in collaboration with H.R. Hoetink and P.J.P. Whitehead, *Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen, 1604-1679: A Humanist Prince in Europe and Brazil* (The Hague: Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen Stichting, 1979), 534; DN, Inv. No. 69: August 28, 1642. The “Tapuyas” here referred to did not indicate the Tarairius of “King” Nhanduí because the latter never lived in an *aldeia*. Presumably the “Tapuyas” over who Jacob Kint was the captain were a non-Tupi Indian community not native to the area. Also, in DN, Inv. No. 70: June 25, 1644, the WIC government describes Kint as captain over only “Brazilians”, not over “Tapuyas”. The term “Tapuyas” was originally a Tupi term designating strangers or foreigners. Europeans later adopted the term to designate any Brazilian Indian people who were linguistically and culturally different from the coastal Tups. See Robert H. Lowie, “Tapuya,” in: Julian H. Steward, ed. *Handbook of South American Indians, Volume 1: The Marginal Tribes* (Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 143) (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1946): 553-556. It is possible that Jacob Kint was the same as the German Jacob Rabe, who was appointed as the WIC mediator to the Rio Grande Tarairius on June 25, 1642, two months before the appointment of Jacob Kint as *aldeia* captain. See DN, Inv. No. 69: June 25, 1642.
was understood by the Brazilian Indians. For instance, in October 1638 Maurits and the High Council replaced the corrupt aldeia captain Jacob Wouters in Rio Grande with the military commander of Fort Ceulen, Captain Pieter van Bijlen, because the latter “is a thoughtful and educated man who is experienced in the Spanish language.” However, one month later, Van Bijlen successfully petitioned the WIC government to appoint “Dirck Mulder of Gulick” in his place because Mulder “had long lived among the Tapuyas and Brazilians and was reasonably experienced in both languages, as well as in Portuguese.” Similarly, in June 1643 David Willems officially succeeded the recently deceased Jacob Krijns as captain of the “Comessi” aldeia because Willems “has lived among this nation for some time and comprehends their language.” Finally, the Danish-German corporal Peter Hansen Hajstrup was probably also selected to serve as liaison to Brazilian Indians because of his ability to speak Portuguese.282

Unlike the Commanders of Brazilians who lived in colonial communities, the aldeia officers resided in the mission villages and were consequently in much closer contact with the Brazilian natives. Unfortunately, it is difficult to conclude whether this group of intercultural diplomats more closely associated with the indigenous peoples than the individuals who functioned as Commanders of Brazilians. The surviving documents do not provide much detailed information about the frames of minds of the aldeia captains. Instead, the available documentation only allows us to conclude that the attitudes of the aldeia captains toward Indians were not uniformly negative or positive.

282 DN, Inv. No. 68: October 12 (Captain van Bijlen appointment); November 22 (Dirck Mulder), 1638. Mulder was already recommended in May 1637 as aldeia captain because of his interpreting skills. (DN, Inv. No. 68: May 9, 1637). See DN, Inv. No. 70: June 9, 1643 for David Willems. On Hajstrup’s ability to speak Portuguese, see Ibold, eds. *Das “Memorial und Jurenal”,* 82 (September 5, 1648).
As we have seen, there were a few *aldeia* captains who established amicable and friendly relations with the Tupis. In addition to the previously mentioned *aldeia* captain who married a Tupi woman, another soldier named Jan Gerritsen van Minnen was appointed captain of the “Tapoa” *aldeia* in Paraíba in November 1638 upon personal recommendation of a native headman.\(^{283}\)

On the other hand, the many complaints from Indians about abusive *aldeia* captains suggest that most WIC soldiers viewed their position as one that was primarily useful for personal enrichment rather than for the benefit of strengthening the strategic alliance between the WIC and the Indians. Continuing examples of men who were replaced because of charges of corruption and recurring WIC ordinances against abuses by “captains of the Brazilians” clearly indicate that these intercultural diplomats did not necessarily bring the Indians closer to the WIC. On October 12, 1638, the *aldeia* captain Jacob Wouters was discharged from his position because of “complaints that the Brazilians had made about him.” Several weeks later, Maurits and the High Council threatened to deport Gerardus Adolphi, the captain of an *aldeia* named “Tappoa.” Adolphi had been ordered to provide twenty Indian workers to the WIC, but he had only sent one, and he kept “the rest for his own profits.” As we have seen, the Indian complaints about the *aldeia* captains led Listry to replace all European diplomatic agents at the mission villages with Indian ones in June 1641.\(^{284}\)

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\(^{283}\) Jan Gerritsen van Minnen’s appointment is mentioned in DN, Inv. No. 68: November 22, 1638.

\(^{284}\) DN, Inv. No. 68: October 12 (discharge of Jacob Wouters), November 6 (Gerardus Adolphi), 1638.
Despite the effort to prevent further corruption and abuse among the newly appointed European aldeia officers by selecting only “married Dutchmen” who were “of good reputation,” the intercultural negotiators continued to endanger the WIC alliance with the aldeia Indians. In January 1644 Maurits and the High Council responded to “the Complaints of the Brazilians” regarding “the dutch Captains of the aldeias” by firing no less than three of them on the same day. According to the native protests, “Jacob Kint, Capt. of the aldeia Tapisserama of the Tapuyas, Willem Jans Capt. of the Aldeia Gorgaou, and Jan Jans, inspector of the aldeia Mauritia,” had exploited their position by employing Indians “for their profit [and] kept them in as much servitude as they have ever been kept.” It was especially revealing that even Jacob Kint was found guilty of abusing the Indians since he was married to a “Brazilian woman.”

The increasingly obvious self-interestedness of the WIC soldiers and lower officers led the High Council to see them as more harmful than helpful, and encouraged officials in Recife and the Republic to accept the plans of prominent Indian leaders such as Anthonio Paraupaba to grant the aldeia Indians a considerable degree of self-rule in November 1644. The surviving WIC correspondence contains no references to European aldeia officers after the inaugural elections for the three native magistrates (regidors) and district courts (schepenbanken) in March 1645. After that date, the Tupi headmen, who were selected by their own people but appointed by the High Council, ruled their villages without interference from Dutch aldeia captains.

From the High Council point of view, the use of WIC soldiers as intercultural diplomats in the Tupi villages had been a failure. Of low social-economic status and with

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285 DN, Inv. No. 70: January 25, 1644. Jan Jans was originally a comforter of the sick, or Calvinist lay-preacher. See DN, Inv. No. 69: Dec. 30, 1642.
few prospects of social mobility, most European aldeia captains viewed their position more as an opportunity to obtain some material wealth than to actually strengthen the alliance between the WIC and the Tupis. Contrary to a recent study suggesting that there was considerable intercultural solidarity between the lowest social classes of European colonists and non-Western peoples in the Atlantic world, the unsuccessful and short-lived experiment with aldeia captains showed that this was not the case in Dutch Brazil. Instead of creating intercultural alliances to challenge the hierarchical colonial order, many poor and uneducated WIC soldiers exploited Indians in order to obtain a better status in colonial society.286

3. Protestant Missionaries

Another category of intercultural mediators that was used by the WIC government to facilitate diplomatic relations with the Brazilian Indians was that of Calvinist ministers and lay-personnel. Because militant Dutch Protestants considered it a unique challenge and opportunity to transform the Catholic colony of Brazil into one dominated by “the true Christian religion,” the Dutch Reformed Church invested a considerable amount of manpower in the evangelization of colonial Brazil. While 12 known ordained ministers sailed to New Netherland in North America during the period 1628-1674, no less than 48 ordained ministers, more than 105 comforters of the sick (lay-preachers), and a considerable number of Protestant schoolteachers journeyed to northeastern Brazil during

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its 24-year period of WIC control. Of this large group, at least six ordained ministers worked as full-time missionaries among the *aldeia* Indians, while an equal number of Calvinist preachers committed a part of their tenure in Brazil to the conversion of the natives who lived in the former Catholic mission villages. In addition, an unknown number of comforters of the sick and schoolteachers assisted in the ambitious evangelization program to turn the partly Catholic Tupi-speaking Indians into Protestant Christians.  

While the Dutch Reformed missionaries were not officially concerned with diplomacy, both the *Heeren XIX* in the Republic and Company authorities in Recife considered the Protestant *predicanten* (ministers), comforters of the sick, and schoolteachers useful intercultural agents who could draw the Brazilian Indians closer to the WIC. There were several reasons why Calvinist church personnel were valuable as negotiators for the Company. First of all, unlike many soldiers and colonists, Protestant missionaries had acquired the necessary linguistic expertise to communicate effectively with the *aldeia* residents. In order to facilitate the evangelization program among the Indians, some Calvinist preachers had quickly learned Iberian languages. By the late 1630s several missionaries had also mastered the *lengua geral*, a standardized and simplified version of the Tupi-Guarani language that was widely used by most native communities throughout coastal Brazil. Although the Calvinist church in the United

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287 The number of ordained ministers in New Netherland is provided by *Zegenrijk Gewest*, 486, appendix 10. For the number of Calvinist ministers and lay-preachers in Brazil, see *Reformed Church*, 305-306. On the number of missionaries among the Indians, see *Reformed Church*, 184. Seventeenth century Dutch Calvinists frequently referred to their religion as the “true Christian religion.”
Provinces did not approve of it on theological grounds, some ministers even created a catechism that was written in Tupi, Portuguese, and Dutch in April 1640.288

In addition to their linguistic skills, Protestant preachers and teachers were also considered useful intercultural diplomats by Company authorities because the missionary program to convert and civilize the aldeia Indians neatly corresponded with the High and economic goals of the WIC to turn the Brazilian native peoples into more docile and loyal allies. Moreover, in contrast to the poor WIC soldiers who frequently abused the aldeia Indians for their own benefit, the WIC government considered the zealous Calvinist missionary workers as having better moral standards. Finally, the Heeren XIX as well as the WIC officials in Recife were fervent Protestants themselves who showed an ongoing interest and sincere concern in the evangelization program among the aldeia Indians. In an era in which politics and religion were closely interrelated, the WIC considered the missionization of the Brazilian natives not only strategically useful but also beneficial for the Dutch Reformed Church. When discussing the roles of the Protestant ministers, lay-preachers, and schoolteachers as negotiators, we therefore need to examine not their actions as High diplomats but also their missionary activities.289


The favorable status of Calvinist missionary workers in the eyes of WIC officials was partly reflected by the ethnic diversity of those who labored among the *aldeia* Indians. Whereas the WIC government in Recife eventually excluded foreigners from the post of *aldeia* officer, no such discriminatory policies were applied to the Dutch Reformed Church. Although most of the ministers, comforters of the sick, and schoolteachers were Dutch-born, a considerable number were of foreign origin. The most prominent foreigner was undoubtedly *predicant* Vincent Joachim Soler, a Spanish-born formerly Catholic friar who had served as a Calvinist minister in French Normandy before being dispatched to Brazil by the Amsterdam Classis in January 1636. Because of his strong personal motivation to convert Indians as well as his Spanish language skills, Soler became quickly involved with the evangelization of Indians. In addition to Soler, there were two English, one French, and another Spanish minister who participated in the Calvinist missionary program.²⁹⁰

There was a considerable hierarchy among ministers, lay-preachers, and schoolteachers. Ordained preachers had often obtained a theological education at a Dutch university, and they received a salary from the WIC that was equal to that of a captain in the army. To signify their special status, ministers were provided with free housing and African slaves who served them as household servants. Although the comforters of the sick, who desired to be ministers, had a slightly higher social rank than the schoolteachers, the wages of both groups were essentially the same and were much lower than that of ordained *predicanten*. Most members of these two groups had their origins in

the lower social classes of the United Provinces and the rest of Northwestern Europe. For some individuals the missionary calling was an avenue for social mobility. For instance, the English-born Thomas Kemp enlisted as a soldier in the WIC army around 1630, but soon rose up in the social ranks after he became comforter of the sick for his fellow Englishmen in Company service. Upon having returned to Brazil from a short stay in Europe in January, 1638, he was employed as a schoolteacher to the Paraíba *aldeias*. In November, 1640, Kemp became an official proponent or minister-candidate and in October, 1641, he was fully ordained as dominee by the Brazil Classis and sent to work among the Indians in Rio Grande.291

By the nature of their work, the Protestant missionary workers were in frequent and close contact with the *aldeia* Indians. From the time of the consolidation of WIC control in northeastern Brazil in 1635 until the outbreak of the Portuguese rebellion in 1645, several ministers and lay-preachers continuously worked among the residents of the mission villages to convert them to Protestant Christianity. In addition, several schoolteachers taught the *aldeia* Indians reading and writing skills so that the natives could read and give commentary on Calvinist catechisms and other religious texts both in their native languages and in Dutch. Many Indian communities initially welcomed the Protestant missionaries. In an official report written for the *Heeren XIX* in January 1638, Governor Maurits and his Councilors enthusiastically noted that the *aldeia* Indians “ask us frequently for our preachers, and wish for nothing better than one or two ministers to

291 *Reformed Church*, chapters 5-6. On Kemp see *Reformed Church*, 178-179.
be sent among them who would communicate with them and instruct them and baptize their children and marry their young folk.”

Soon after the Classis Brazil, the organization of the Dutch Calvinist church in Brazil that held frequent councils to coordinate religious policies in the colony, had begun to dispatch ministers and supporting personnel to the aldeia villages in the second half of the 1630s, some dominees reported considerable progress in the evangelization of the Brazilian Indians. During the Classis meeting of October 29, 1638, David a Doreslaer, a university educated minister worked among the aldeia Indians, told his colleagues that “taking into account the time and the people the fruits are not regrettable; the people come for daily prayers and singing and to listen to God’s Word, they also listen with obedience to their preacher, the only problem being that they are not yet ready to being served the Holy Communion.” Similarly, in 1639, Soler reported that “When the inhabitants of the [Indian] villages wish to marry or baptize their children, they go to the nearest church, or the minister goes to their village if this is a long way.” In addition, Soler, who was at that time serving as army-chaplain, noted that “Each time the army returns, I marry and baptize many people. They now adopt Christian names instead of using the names of birds and fishes, as they used to.”

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292 Maurits, Van Ceulen, Van der Dussen, “Sommier Discours,” 291-292. It is possible that Maurits and the Council exaggerated the missionary progress to impress their superiors in the Republic. However, continuing examples of Indian interest in Christianity suggests that the Tupis were truly interested in embracing certain aspects of Protestant Christianity.

293 Grothe, October 29, 1638, session 1, point 7 (250) (Doreslaer). For Soler, see Vicente Joachim Soler, “Brief and Curious Report of Some Peculiarities of Brazil,” (Cort ende Sonderlingh Verhael van eenen Brief van Monsier Soler) (1639), translated by B.N. Teensma in: Ferrão, eds., Dutch Brazil, Vol. 1, 42.
The instruction of the *aldeia* Indians in reading and writing progressed substantially during the late 1630s and early 1640s. In 1639, Adriaen van der Dussen, a member of the High Council, remarked about the education policies of the Protestant missionaries that they have “already done much good education … going from time to time to the Aldeas for visitations and education, baptizing their children and uniting couples at weddings.” Similarly, reporting back to the Classis Brazil in a meeting held in Recife on April 20, 1640, two schoolteachers, Dionisus Biscaretto and Thomas Kemp, testified that “they work with great zeal toward the instruction of the children.” At the Classis meeting of November 1640 minister Soler even informed the church council “that in the *aldeia* of his Excellency [Maurits] there is a Brazilian, who is reasonably experienced in the foundations of religion, reading, and writing, skilled enough to instruct the Brazilians.” The Protestant council-members were excited about this, and they resolved to write Maurits and the High Council to set aside a stipend for this Brazilian schoolteacher. In the summer of 1642, two other Indians named Melchior de Francisco and João Gonsalves were also appointed by the Classis Brazil “to serve as schoolteacher in the Dutch and Brazilian language”.

In addition to facilitating close relations with the *aldeia* Indians through their religious instruction and literacy education program, the Calvinist missionaries also became respected among the “Brazilians” by their attempts to shield the Indians from constant colonial demands for labor and cannon fodder. Protestant ministers successfully lobbied Maurits and the High Council to gain special status for the *aldeia* named

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294 Van der Dussen, “Rapport van den Staet,” 61. Grothe: April 20, 1640: session 4, point 3 (273); November 21, 1640: session 3, point 4 (286). For the two other Indian schoolteachers see *Reformed Church*, 196-197. Gonsalves later served as WIC schoolteacher to Indians in Ceara. See DN, Inv. No. 75: August 31, 1651.
“Maurits” in the province of Itamaracá. During a meeting with Governor-General Maurits and the Council in Recife in October 1639, Doreslaer together with the ministers Soler and Frederick Kesseler personally requested that the residents of the aldeia be released from supplying warriors and workers in order to facilitate their evangelization. Emphasizing that the missionary program among the inhabitants was making progress because “some of them are already experienced in the foundations in the Christian religion,” Doreslaer persuaded the authorities to grant a special status to this mission village, a status that allowed the Indians to tend to their manioc-crops and protected them from having to serve with the WIC army or on sugar plantations. This privileged position for the “Maurits” aldeia was so successful that the mission village quickly experienced population growth, which was remarkable since aldeias that were not so protected by the WIC witnessed a continuing decline in residents throughout the 1630s and 1640s.295

Although the outbreak of the Portuguese rebellion in the summer of 1645, with its chaotic and brutal guerilla war, put an end to the Protestant evangelization program, several Calvinist missionaries continued to work among the aldeia Indians until the WIC evacuated Brazil in January 1654. Shortly after the moradores, the Portuguese planters and colonists who lived in Dutch-controlled Brazil, revolted against WIC rule, the ministers Kemp and Cornelis van der Poel were requested to persuade the aldeia communities to stay loyal to the Dutch. In addition, the Classis Brazil and individual Calvinist ministers frequently appealed to their colleagues in the United Provinces to provide material aid to “the poor Brazilians” who were suffering greatly from the

295 For this meeting and the granting of special status, see DN, Inv. No. 68: October 8, 1639. For the demographic growth of the aldeia see Van den Boogaart, “Nederlandse expansie,” 124.
hardships brought on by the Portuguese guerilla war against the Dutch and their Indian allies. In 1647 and 1648 Dutch Reformed churches in the Republic organized several humanitarian collections for the aldeia Indian families that had sought shelter in the vicinity of WIC forts in the provinces of Itamaracá and Paraíba, and Rio Grande. The contributions usually consisted of linen and cloth, and missionary personnel distributed them in Brazil. According to some of the Calvinist ministers “The Indians were amazed … not being able to comprehend how it was possible that brethren who had never seen them demonstrated so much affection.”

Protestant missionaries had made some progress in the evangelization of the Brazilian Indians, and they also actively protected the natives from colonial abuse and destructive warfare. However, for all their close interactions with native Brazilians and despite their sincere interest in the spiritual well-being of the Indians, the missionary personnel of the WIC simultaneously remained strongly suspicious and skeptical of the “Brazilians” and their culture. Although they were initially genuinely enthusiastic about the program to convert the aldeia Indians to the “true Christian religion,” the Protestant missionaries increasingly realized that the Tupis only selectively adopted ritualistic aspects of Dutch Calvinism while continuing native cultural practices and Catholic rituals that the predicanten strongly despised.

One of the first major problems to arise between the Protestant missionaries and the aldeia Indians concerned the linguistic and religious instruction of the Indian children. The WIC government had already proposed special education plans for native

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296 DN, Inv. No. 70: July 8, 1645 (Kemp and Van der Poel). Reformed Church, 208-210, contains an excellent discussion of the Calvinist charities to the Indians in 1647 and 1648. For the quote see GAA, Archive of the Classis Amsterdam, Inv. No. 88, no. 4: Letter of November 23, 1648, quoted in Reformed Church, 210.
children in March 1637 but it was only after an official truce had been made between the Portuguese and the Dutch in Brazil in the summer of 1642 that Maurits and the High Council again raised the issue of Indian boarding schools with the Classis missionaries. In a meeting held in mid-June of that year Doreslaer and Kemp were instructed by the colonial government to see if “the brazilian children together with the dutch ones can be educated in the same schools so that they will receive the same knowledge about the [Dutch] language, civil arts and crafts, and by conversation among themselves become the same [as the Dutch children] and in this way grow up so that they will better harvest the fruits of their education in the Christian religion.” However, after having repeatedly attempted to persuade Indian parents to give up their children to boarding schools, Protestant ministers together with the Commander of Brazilians Johannes Listry reported back to Maurits and the Council in March 1644 that even though the Indian parents say they will support this plan “if it comes down to it they hide their children and send them away.” Because of the Indian unwillingness to provide their children to Calvinist-run boarding schools, the Protestant missionaries were forced to travel to the aldeias where they were exposed to Indians who did not behave as model-converts.\(^{297}\)

During the meetings of the Classis Brazil there are regular references to complaints from missionaries such as Doreslaer and Kemp about the ongoing difficulties with the Indians in the aldeias. One particularly irritating problem for the Protestant ministers was the practice of polygamy by the Indians in the mission villages. Both Tupi men and women were traditionally accustomed to establishing marital ties in different communities to strengthen alliances and kinship bonds, and they continued to do this by

\(^{297}\) DN, Inv. No. 68: March 18, 1637 (plan for Indian school); Inv. No. 69: July 11, 1642 (quotation); Inv. No. 70: March 24, 1644 (Indian rejection).
frequently moving in and out of *aldeias*, to the dismay of the Calvinist preachers who wished to work with a permanent and fixed native population. In the Classis meeting of October 1638 the Calvinist clergymen discussed how to prevent such separations and unions. At the Classis council of April 1640 the “*predicanten* of the Brazilians” reported that, even though they tried to persuade separated Indian couples to reunite, “it is of negligible effect.” Similar complaints about and resolutions against the ongoing polygamous practices of the Indians continued during the early 1640s but they were never effective.

The limited success of the Protestant evangelization program among the *aldeia* Indians was made especially clear when the WIC government implemented an “ordinance for the Brazilians,” drawn by the Classis Brazil in September 1644 to regulate life in the mission villages. This long list of 19 points circumscribing Indian behavior strongly revealed that, after almost ten years of work, the Calvinists missionaries had only had limited success in transforming the Tupis into Protestant Christians. Several of the points indicate the persistence of native cultural practices abhorred by the Protestant missionaries. For instance, the first declaration prohibited the Indians from continuing to paint and decorate their bodies because it “represented the depiction of the devil who was accustomed to reveal himself to their ancestors during the ancient days of their dark age.”

Other prohibitions issued in the ordinance were those against drinking, dancing, polygamy, and sexual practices.²⁹⁹

Equally irritating and humiliating for the Calvinist preachers was that the aldeia Indians continued to adhere to the Catholic rituals and beliefs that they had adopted from Jesuit missionaries who had originally established the mission villages in the late sixteenth century. The second point in the ordinance prohibited any Indians from “going to the papists or other idol worshippers whoever they might be, in order to get letters or [rosary] beads or crucifixes or St. Jans crosses and more of the same and to use these for superstitious incantations.” Any individual caught with these Catholic paraphernalia was to be swiftly punished. In addition, the sixth point declared it illegal for the aldeia Indians to celebrate any more “saint or holy days in the manner of the papacy.”³⁰⁰

In the light of these continuing pre-Christian and Catholic practices by the aldeia Indians, it is not surprising that the Protestant missionaries became increasingly disillusioned. Describing the progress of the evangelization program among the Indians in October 1641, Doreslaer “declared that he had made some progress, but not as much as he would have liked.” Similarly, at the inaugural meeting of the Paraíba Classis of the Dutch Reformed Church on September 4, 1642, the clergy-members mentioned, “that several disaffections have emerged in the Aldea Maijereba between the people and their predicant Kempius.” Although exactly what these “disaffections” were is not clear, they reveal that the Protestant missionaries had come in conflict with the “Brazilians”.³⁰¹

²⁹⁹ DN, Inv. No. 70: September 20, 1644.

³⁰⁰ DN, Inv. No. 70, September 20, 1644.

³⁰¹ Grothe: October 17, 1641: session 5, no. 1 (302) (Doreslaer); LPB, Inv. No. 57: “Praparatoire vergaderinge tot Oprichtinge van onse classis, gehouden in Frederica de Paraiba,
Many Calvinist mission workers eventually revealed their disdain for the Brazilian Indians by simply abandoning the evangelization program after several intensive years. For all their interest in the conversion of the native peoples, many prominent *predicanten* returned to the United Provinces soon after their contract with the WIC had expired. Doreslaer, who had been one of the first missionaries among the “Brazilians” in 1637, abandoned the missionary program in April 1643, and set sail for the Republic. Minister Eduardus, who was sick and had to go back to Europe to recover, accompanied him. One year later Soler followed them, after having served almost eight years as part-time missionary to the Indians. At the time of the outbreak of the Portuguese revolt in 1645, there were therefore remaining only three ministers and several lay-preachers and schoolteachers who spent at least some of their time toward the conversion of the Brazilians. However, following the beginning of the Portuguese revolt, many of the remaining missionary personnel sought to return to the Republic to escape the increasingly desperate situation in Brazil. At the meeting of the Classis Brazil in April 1646, no less than two comforters of the sick and one schoolteacher petitioned the Classis to return home because their contracts had expired.302

A small group of ministers as well as lay-personnel did remain in Brazil to continue their missionary work among the Indians. Despite the Portuguese guerilla war, which made life more and more precarious, missionaries such as Kemp, Van der Poel,

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302 *Reformed Church*, 199, discusses the departure of Doreslaer, Soler, and Eduardus. For Eduardus see also *Reformed Church*, 178.
and Johannus Apricius continued to visit *aldeia* villages. Although their success in transforming the “Brazilians” into model Christian converts remained negligible, these individuals continued to work among native peoples until their death or until the Dutch surrendered Brazil in January 1654. As we will see later in this chapter, minister Kemp proselytized to the Indians of the frontier province of Ceará during the early 1650s. In addition, the remaining missionary personnel distributed among the Indian refugees humanitarian aid that had been sent by Calvinist churches in the Republic during the late 1640s. While all the Protestant missionaries strongly rejected the continuation of Indian cultural practices and were generally disappointed about the lack of progress in the conversion of the *aldeia* Indians, a small group of dedicated Calvinist preachers closely identified with the plight of the natives after the Portuguese revolted in 1645.303

4. Diplomatic Agents among the Tarairius

The fourth group of European intercultural diplomats in Dutch-controlled Brazil was composed of individuals who acted as negotiators between the WIC and the Tarairius of the interior of the province of Rio Grande. Chapter 3 related how the WIC government, after having established diplomatic ties with the Tarairius in March 1634, concluded that the Tarairius were not only useful but dangerous allies due to their ferocity in warfare and their willingness to commit atrocities against non-combatants. Another problem for the WIC authorities was that the Tarairius were unfamiliar with firearms and fighting in closed combat formations, unlike the “Brazilians” of the mission

303 On the continuity of the missionary program after 1645 see *Reformed Church*, 207-210. Kemp was a missionary in Ceara from 1649 until his death sometime in 1653. See *Reformed Church*, 179. For Apricius see *Reformed Church*, 180-181.
villages who had long been exposed to European military weapons. When a contingent of Tarairiu warriors participated in a WIC expedition in Pernambuco in the spring of 1636, the Company official, W. Schott expressed his dismay at the seemingly cowardly behavior of the Tarairius: “In the beginning they marched furiously … but as soon as we arrived at the river and began to fire on the others [the Portuguese], the Tapuas [Tarairius] were nowhere to be found.” Schott also reported to “have seen that a stray bullet fell in the ground underneath them, [and] they began to dig for it, as a dog who is been thrown a stone.”

Because of these problems and fearing to alienate Portuguese sugar planters - whose loyalty and expertise the High Council needed if ever Brazil were to become a profitable colony - the WIC government generally refrained from employing “King” Nhanduí and his Tarairiu kinsmen during the rest of the conquest of northeastern Brazil in the late 1630s. The Tarairius remained a problem for the WIC, since they frequently came down from their homelands in the mountainous interior of Rio Grande to live off the edible wild fruits as well as manioc-crops that were planted by colonists in the coastal areas. To avoid these periodic incursions, Governor Maurits and the High Council frequently supplied the Tarairius with gifts to persuade them to stay in the interior and remain friendly with the WIC. For instance, in April 1638 the WIC government instructed Company officials to select “2 swords, 4 large axes, 4 small axes, 4 machetes, 56 long nails,” as well as “2 hats, beads of various sorts, … some fishhooks great and small, and two shirts,” as diplomatic presents to be given to “Jan Duije, King of the Tappoeijers.” One year later, in March 1639, a delegation of thirty-five Tarairius visiting

304 LPB, Inv. No. 51: Letter from W. Schott to the Heeren XIX, June 8, 1636.
Recife were provided with a large quantity of bells, flutes, beads, mirrors, scissors, axes, and “some old iron.”

It is not entirely clear which individuals functioned as negotiators between the WIC and the Tarairius during this period. Most likely, some of the six WIC soldiers that had been sent by Fort Ceulen commander Georg Garstman to accompany Nhandui in the spring of 1634 had acquired enough proficiency in the Tarairiu language that they could effectively communicate. One of these soldiers was perhaps the previously mentioned Dirck Mulder, appointed aldeia captain in November 1638 because of his ability to understand the Tupi language and the Tarairiu tongue. When the intercultural skills of Mulder were brought to the attention of Maurits and the High Council in May 1637, the WIC officials reported that Mulder had served under Garstman’s command as a soldier and “had long lived among the Tapuijas, and was used as interpreter.”

Although Mulder probably continued to serve as negotiator among the Tarairius after he was sent to command a Tupi Indian mission village in Rio Grande in November 1638, the ongoing depredations of the Tarairius against Portuguese colonists made it imperative for the WIC government to appoint a permanent liaison among Nhanduí and his people to prevent them from coming down the mountains and live off the colonists’ lands. The man they chose was Jacob Rabe or “Jacob Rabbi,” as he is often referred to in contemporary WIC and Portuguese sources. While Rabe had reportedly been in close contact with the Tarairius since at least 1639, he was officially appointed as negotiator to

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305 Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 528. For the gifts, see DN, Inv. No. 68: April 1, 1638; March 24, 1639.

306 DN, Inv. No. 68: May 9, 1637 (quotation); November 22, 1638 (appointment of Mulder as aldeia captain and reference to his ability to speak both Tupi and Tarairiu).
these Indians in the summer of 1642. “Because the Tapujies occasionally do great
damage in the capitanie [province] of rio grande and we found that in the meantime one
Jacob Rabij has stayed among them,” Maurits and the High Council on June 25, 1642
hired “the heer [lord] Jacob Rabij at Sergeant’s income of 18 guilder [per month] in the
Company’s service so that by the … authority that he has with them [he] will keep the
capitanie free of incursions.” Several weeks later the WIC government also instructed
Rabe “to take up his residence” among the Tarairius in order to prevent “the Invasions of
Jan dowij [Nhandui] and his people.”

Not much is known about Rabe’s background and career before he became
involved with the Tarairius. He was an ethnic German from the central German region of
Waldeck. He probably arrived in Brazil together with Governor Maurits in early 1637,
but it is unclear that the two personally knew each other. However, the privileged use of
the title heer or “lord” by the WIC government when referring to Rabe suggests that the
latter had considerable social status. Rabe’s prominent status was also reflected by the
fact that he had an unnamed “Dutch boy” as a personal servant at his private farm in Rio
Grande during the mid-1640s.

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307 DN, Inv. No. 69: June 25 (appointment), July 11 (instructions to live with Tarairius),
1642. DN, Inv. No. 69: February 19, 1643 suggests that Rabe was associated with the Tarairius
since the time of the invasion of a large Spanish fleet. This invasion occurred in 1639. See also
Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 528. In earlier literature Rabe is sometimes referred to as a
Portuguese Jew. However, there is no archival or written evidence (yet) that indicates that this
was the case. Perhaps due to the widespread use of the Portuguese language and the considerable
number of Jews in northeastern Brazil the name “Rabe” was pronounced or associated with
“Rabbi”. For this controversy, see Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 528, note 25. B.N.
Teensma argues that Jacob’s last name was derived from the German word for raven; personal
communication to the author by Teensma, August 2000. See also B.N. Teensma, “Roelof Baro’s
Tarairiu-monument,” Yumtzilob 11, No. 3 (1999), 360.

308 On Rabe’s background see Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 528. For the social
significance of the title heer, see Zegenrijk Gewest, 296-303. On the unnamed “Dutch boy” as
Rabe’s servant, see the testimony of Willem ten Berge in: “Information regarding the murder
His privileged social status makes it all the more mysterious that Rabe associated himself so closely with the Tarairius, who were, after all, considered dangerous and uncontrollable “wild men” by the colonial government in Recife. While Rabe’s exact motivations for establishing a close relationship with the Tarairius are lost to us, he may have had a personal fascination with these native peoples. Throughout the history of Dutch-controlled Brazil, the Tarairius were an object of “ethnological” curiosity for Company officials and prominent visitors, because the Tarairiu way of life was so different from that of other ethnic and cultural groups in the colony. While WIC authorities and other individuals made frequent but generic observations about the Portuguese, Jewish, Tupis, Africans, mulattoes, and mestizos who lived in northeastern Brazil, several prominent individuals associated with the WIC produced detailed ethnographic descriptions of the Tarairius. Albert Eeckhout, one of the professional Dutch painters that had accompanied Maurits to Brazil, even produced several remarkable life-size paintings depicting the Tarairius as exotic savages lacking any traits of Christian European civilization.

In a posthumously published and edited ethnography, Rabe provided one of the more balanced portraits of the Tarairius and their way of life, a report based on personal observations and daily interaction with these people. Although Rabe’s ethnographic account of the Tarairius has disappeared, its incorporation into the official and prestigious narrative history of Maurits’ tenure in Brazil, published in Latin by the prominent Dutch scholar Caspar van Baerle (Barlaeus) in 1647, reveals that Rabe shared with the colonial and cultural elite in northeastern Brazil an interest in the Tarairius as exotic savages.

committed against the person of Jacop Rabij,” DNA, First Section, Acquisitions, Inv. No. XL-01 (1906), 31-38.
However, while prominent colonists considered the Tarairius a dangerous and uncontrollable people, Rabe lived among them. In this respect, it is also interesting to note that this German individual also established a long-term relationship with a Tupi Indian woman named Dominga during the 1640s. Although his exact motivations to live among the Tarairius remain unknown, clearly Rabe was personally drawn to the native peoples of Brazil.

There was a material dimension to this. The Tarairius provided Rabe with plunder from Portuguese colonists. In February 1643, barely half a year after he had officially been appointed as liaison to the Tarairius by the WIC government, Rabe was accused by colonial officials in Rio Grande of actively encouraging the Tarairius to bring to him such loot. Evidence against Rabe came from two escaped African slaves who had been stolen by the Tarairius from their Rio Grande owners and then brought to Rabe. The Rio Grande magistrates and Georg Garstman, the WIC commander of Fort Ceulen, were outraged that Rabe and the Tarairius were shattering the fragile colonial society, which Company officials and Portuguese colonists had constructed in this frontier province of northeastern Brazil. Garstman arrested Rabe and planned to bring him to Recife for

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further questioning. However, Rabe managed to escape during the night and he soon rejoined the Tarairius in the sertão of Rio Grande in February 1643. Upon being notified of Rabe’s activities, Maurits and the High Council suspended Rabe’s salary as “commander of the Tapoijers,” and they instructed Rio Grande law officials to arrest Rabe once again and bring him to Recife. At the same time the WIC government did not want to antagonize the Tarairius, so Maurits and the High Council instructed Garstman and Rio Grande authorities to persuade the Tarairius “through good words and friendship” to leave the coastal area inhabited by European colonist and to retire to the sertão.  

Sources do not reveal Rabe’s activities February 1643 and March 1645. There is no reference in any correspondence of this period to a possible arrest of Rabe by Rio Grande officials. On the other hand, there is one intriguing mention in the Daily Minute of January 8, 1644, suggesting that Rabe was one of three nominees for the position as district-magistrate (schepen) in the province of Rio Grande. According to this official resolution, Maurits and the High Council considered Jean Soler, Fort Ceulen commander Georg Garstman, and one “Jacob Rabbao” as three candidates to fill the vacant schepen-seat in the Potegi district of Rio Grande. Although the name “Rabbao” is obviously not the same as the more commonly used name of “Rabbi” or “Rabe”, it is important to note that Rabe did have a farm or small plantation in the same Potegi district. 

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310 DN, Inv. No. 69: February 12 and 19 (quotations), 1643.

311 For this reference to the schepen election, see DN, Inv. No. 70: January 8, 1644. Eventually the WIC government appointed Jean Soler, the son of the prominent Spanish-born minister Vicent Joachim Soler, as the schepen. Interestingly, Tarairius killed Jean Soler under mysterious circumstances in the fall of 1645. Although WIC records do not indicate the motivations for this murder, it is possible that a disgruntled Rabe ordered Tarairius to assassinate Soler in 1645. For Jean Soler, see B.N. Teensma, “De Braziliaanse brieven van ds Vincent
Because Rabe was addressed with the privileged title of *heer* by the WIC government in 1642, it is possible that Maurits and the High Council still viewed Rabe, despite his problematic behavior in 1643, as a prominent member of colonial society who was eligible for the position as *schepen*. In this respect it is also significant that the Tarairius are not mentioned after February 1643 as having invaded the coastal region of Rio Grande. Realizing that he had transgressed the line of acceptable behavior by personally profiting from the Tarairiu raids, Rabe may have persuaded the Indians to refrain from harassing European colonists on the coast while he attempted to regain good will among the Recife authorities. A letter from the WIC government in Brazil to the *Heeren XIX* dated March 24, 1645, mentions that “Jacob Rabbe has left with the presents to go to the King Jan Duij [Nhandui], but we have not yet heard from his exploits.” Revealing the WIC concerns about maintaining the alliance with the Tarairius, the problematic Rabe had apparently been rehabilitated and reinstated as “commander of the Tapoiyers,” by the early spring of 1645. 312

After the outbreak of the Portuguese rebellion in early June 1645, the WIC authorities called on Rabe to rally the Rio Grande Tarairius for possible military actions against the Portuguese rebels and their African and Indian allies. Rabe took the instructions from the High Council seriously. On June 28, 1645, Rabe informed the Fort Ceulen commander that “Jan Duij declares to be loyal to the Hollanders,” and that the


312 On Rabe’s farm in Rio Grande, see the testimony of schout Jan Hoeck in “Information regarding the murder committed against the person of Jacop Rabij,” 24-31. According to Hoeck Rabe’s farm was located nearby the residence of Dirck Mulder who lived in the Potegi district. On Rabe in March 1645, see LPB, Inv. No. 60: General Missive from the High Council in Recife to the *Heeren XIX*, March, 24, 1645.
Tarairius were eagerly waiting for instructions from the High Council to attack Portuguese rebels and colonists. One week later, Rabe again wrote to the WIC commander, asking him for weapons to distribute among the Tarairius. In addition, Rabe supplied the military officer at Fort Ceulen with intelligence about other Indian peoples in the sertão of Rio Grande. To signify his loyalty to the WIC, Rabe signed off his short letter with the declaration that he “served the Honorable Company out of love.”

Rabe soon embarrassed the WIC, and much worse. He participated in the Tarairiu massacre of a large group of Portuguese colonists in the community of Cunhau in Rio Grande on July 16, 1645. Although the exact circumstances of the massacre are not fully revealed, in contemporary Dutch sources, recent findings by Catholic officials (part of the beatification process of the Catholic martyrs of Cunhau) has revealed that a large group of Portuguese colonists and clergy members were executed in cold blood by a group of Tarairius, Potiguars, and some WIC soldiers. According to the recently published official report of the Catholic Church, the Indian-WIC force led by Rabe killed the Portuguese colonists while the latter were attending mass at the chapel in the small town of Cunhau. In addition, both contemporary Portuguese and Dutch sources argue that Rabe did nothing to stop the mutilation and cannibalism of some of the Portuguese victims by Tarairiu warriors in the chapel.

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313 LPB, Inv. No. 60: Letters from Jacob Rabe to the Commander of Fort Ceulen, June 28 and July 4, 1645. See also Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 529.

314 The Portuguese victims of the Cunhau massacre were recently beatified by the Catholic Church as martyrs in March 2000. As part of this beatification process, the Catholic Church had the circumstances surrounding the massacre investigated by several Catholic officials. Although I was unable to read a copy of this official report, the publication was widely covered in Brazilian, Catholic, and Dutch newspapers. For the Brazilian newspapers, see especially the “Historia dos Martires,” in the Tribuna do Norte: http://www.Tribunadonorte.com.br/especial/martires/indios.htm (accessed on 2/14/2002). For a
Although seventeenth-century Portuguese sources and the recent Catholic beatification report claim that the High Council had officially instructed Rabe to perpetrate the massacre, it is very unlikely that the WIC authorities in Recife ordered the killing of defenseless Portuguese colonists who were attending a Sunday Mass. On the contrary, ever since the mid-1630s, the WIC government in Brazil had attempted to attract Portuguese colonists to the Dutch side, because they were invaluable as experienced sugar planters. As we have seen, whenever the Tarairius threatened to raid isolated Portuguese communities or sugar mills in Rio Grande, the High Council tried to protect the Portuguese colonists and possessions as much as possible by sending diplomatic gifts and envoys such as Rabe to the Tarairius. In addition, the WIC authorities realized that the Portuguese guerillas would exploit any incident to rally more Portuguese colonists to their side at the expense of the Dutch. When the High Council learned of the Cunhau massacre one week later, they dispatched Jodocus a Stetten, a Protestant minister familiar with the terrain in Rio Grande, and Captain Willem Lamberts with a company of WIC troops, “to bring the Tapoijers under control and to avoid further disasters.” At the same time, the High Council tolerated the aggressive behavior of the

Tarairius and Potiguars in the hope that it would demoralize the Portuguese guerillas. In a missive to the Heeren XIX in the Republic, the High Council argued that the Cunhau massacre would intimidate the Portuguese guerillas, “so that the rebels would see what people will be sent against them.”

The Tarairius and the Tupi-speaking Potiguars perpetrated the killings at Cunhau without official or active support from the WIC. As we have seen, both Indian peoples had a long-standing hatred of the Portuguese, a hatred that predated the Dutch invasion of northeastern Brazil. Because Portuguese soldiers and colonists had frequently attacked Tarairiu and Potiguar communities in frontier wars and slave-raiding expeditions, the Tarairius and the Potiguars did not hesitate to retaliate against Portuguese colonists when they had the chance. In addition, for both the Tarairius and the Potiguars, avenging lost relatives was one of the main motivations for warfare. Although WIC officials had for the most part succeeded in protecting Portuguese colonists from Tarairiu and Potiguar vengeance during the 1640s, the outbreak of the widespread Portuguese guerilla and rebellion against Dutch rule in 1645 provided the Tarairius and the Potiguars with an opportunity to avenge their relatives who had been enslaved or killed by the Portuguese.

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315 DN, Inv. No. 70: July 25, 1645 (first quotation); LPB, Inv. No. 60: General Missive from the WIC government to the Heeren XIX, July 31, 1645 (second quotation). For Jodocus a Stetten, see the many references to him in Reformed Church.

While the Tarairius and the Potiguars had clear motivations to kill the Portuguese colonists at Cunhau, it is uncertain why Rabe actively participated in the bloody attack as well. One reason was his interest in forcibly obtaining slaves and material possessions from Portuguese colonists. In 1643, Rabe had already been accused of appropriating African slaves from Tarairius who had raided Portuguese colonists. Significantly, in a letter written from his colonial farm at Potegi in Rio Grande several weeks after the Cunhau massacre, Rabe indicated that he currently owned no less than three African slaves and three horses. Rabe seems also to have increasingly identified with the Tarairius and their hatred of the Portuguese. Although several letters and reports from Rabe and Jodocus a Stetten relating to the Cunhau incident have been lost, their surviving correspondence of the summer of 1645 suggests that Rabe justified the massacre by asserting that all Portuguese colonists were potential enemies who could not be trusted. In a letter to the High Council of September 1, a Stetten wrote that Rabe and the Tarairius criticized the lenient attitude of the WIC toward Portuguese colonists because “we spared our enemies who would [later] break our necks.”

Although Rabe was afraid of arrest for his involvement in the Cunhau massacre, the High Council did not have any plans to recall him. Instead, because of his special relationship with the Tarairius, Rabe was allowed to remain among these Indians for the duration of the rebellion. Since the Tarairius were useful to the High Council as ruthless

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317 LPB, Inv. No. 60: Letters from Jacob Rabe to Jodocus a Stetten, August 7 (three slaves and three horses) and 11, 1645. LPB, Inv. No. 60: Letter from Jodocus a Stetten to the High Council, September 1, 1645 (quotation about Rabe and Tarairius). In both these pieces of correspondence Rabe and A Stetten refer to letters and reports that they have written about the Cunhau incident. Unfortunately, these materials are not included in the remaining OWIC archive in The Hague. Because of the sensitive nature of this incident it is of course possible that the High Council destroyed this documentary evidence after the WIC was expelled from Brazil in 1654.
allies in the war against the Portuguese guerillas, Rabe and the Tarairius were even permitted to plunder colonial farms and plantations in Rio Grande in the immediate aftermath of the Cunhau massacre. Reflecting the desperate strategy of the WIC officials in Recife against the Portuguese rebels, the damaging Tarairiu raids on the coast of Rio Grande “had to be tolerated, because it is in any case better to have control over spoiled territory than lost territory.” Throughout the fall of 1645, Rabe and the Tarairius consequently continued their destructive hit-and-run attacks on both Portuguese rebels and the isolated Portuguese communities in northeastern Brazil. During at least one of these raids, in early October, Rabe and the Tarairius together with a contingent of Potiguar and WIC soldiers, again perpetrated a mass killing of primarily non-combatants in Rio Grande.318

Needless to say, the raids of Rabe and the Tarairius on the northeastern coast greatly angered Portuguese colonists and rebel-leaders. In late August 1645 the Luso-Brazilian commander, Andre Vidal de Negreiros, officially complained in a letter to the High Council about the use of the Tarairius. Similarly, Portuguese colonists in the town of Goiana in northern Pernambuco petitioned WIC authorities to allow them the right to carry firearms to protect themselves from Tarairiu attacks. However, the High Council refused this petition, fearing that rebels would obtain weapons from the residents.319

318 LPB, Inv. No. 60: General Missive from the WIC Government to the Heeren XIX, July 31, 1645. For the attacks against Portuguese rebels and colonists in Rio Grande in the fall of 1645, see Johan Nieuhof, Gedenkweerdige Brasiliaense Zee- en Lant-Reize: Behelzende Al het geen op dezelve is voorgevallen. Beneficiens Een Bondige Beschrijving van gantsch Neerlands Brasil (Amsterdam: Widow of Jacob van Meurs, 1682), 144, 153. The October killing of Portuguese non-combatants eventually also led to the beatification by the Catholic Church in March 2000. For this process, see the sources quoted in note 68 of this chapter.

319 Nieuhof, Gedenkweerdige Brasiliaense Zee- en Lant-Reize, 142 (Vidal letter), 148 (Goiana residents).
In addition to being hated by the Portuguese, Rabe was especially strongly disliked by Fort Ceulen commander Georg Garstman. What upset Garstman most about Rabe was the latter’s unwillingness to stop the depredations against Portuguese colonists in Rio Grande. Garstman, married to a Portuguese woman and eager to establish himself as a prominent member of Rio Grande colonial society, was increasingly angered by the activities of Rabe and the seemingly uncontrollable and “savage” Tarairius. After Garstman’s parents-in-law were killed in the Cunhau massacre of July 1645, Garstman consequently took it upon himself to get rid of Rabe who he held personally responsible. Garstman had also heard rumors that Rabe had a hidden treasure of plundered Portuguese silver and jewelry. On April 4, 1646, two WIC soldiers under the command of Garstman assassinated Rabe, after Garstman had lured Rabe to the tavern of the former interpreter and aldeia captain Dirck Mulder in Potegi in Rio Grande.\textsuperscript{320}

Since the High Council knew that Rabe was “held in high esteem” by the Tarairius, authorities feared that Rabe’s death would endanger the fragile alliance with the Tarairius. It was therefore of great importance for the High Council to convince the Tarairius that the assassination of Rabe was an unfortunate and regrettable crime committed by a military officer acting on his own without support from the WIC. To deliver this delicate message to the Tarairius, the Company officials called upon the services of Roelof Baro, an experienced woudloper or backwoods-explorer, who had

\textsuperscript{320} Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 529-530, especially note 34. I have discussed the relationship between Garstman and Rabe in more detail in “The Murder of Jacob Rabe: Contesting High and Legal Authority in Colonial Northeastern Brazil,” paper presented at the “New World Orders” conference at the University of Pennsylvania, October 20, 2001. For a biography of Rabe and a Portuguese translation of the documents regarding his murder, see A. de Carvalho, “Um intérprete dos Tapuios,” in: Carvalho, \textit{Aventuras e aventureiros no Brasil} (Rio de Janeiro, 1930): 165-204.
been familiar with the Tarairius and other native peoples of the northeastern interior for several years. Baro was the most prominent and best-documented member of a very few individuals in Brazil who were employed by the WIC to explore the northeastern interior and establish contact with potential Indian allies.321

Baro supposedly marooned on the southern Brazilian shore in 1617 while serving aboard a Dutch vessel. Because of his young age, local Portuguese authorities who captured him hoped to use the young Dutchman as an Indian interpreter. Baro was reportedly placed in an aldeia where he learned the Tupi language. After the Dutch invasion in 1631, Baro made his way to Recife, where he offered his services to the WIC as explorer of the mountainous dry hinterlands of the northeast. The earliest documentary reference to Baro in the surviving WIC correspondence is in early August, 1643, when Baro is mentioned as having returned from an expedition to “Terra Nova” in the interior of the northeast, where he explored the region and made contact with natives. In 1644, Baro led an important military campaign to the sertão of southern Pernambuco, against one of the isolated mocambos or communities of African runaway slaves, which presented a clear threat to the colonial order. One year later Baro worked together with Rabe in the negotiation of a truce between the Ceará Indians and the WIC. By the time he

321 DNA, OWIC, Secret Minutes of the WIC Government in Brazil, Inv. No. 76: April 23, 1646 (quotation about Rabe). For Baro’s career before 1646, see B.N. Teensma, “Roelof Baro’s Tarairiu-monument,” Yumtzilob 11, No. 3 (1999): 351-373. A Portuguese version of this essay was published as: “O diário de Rodolfo Baro (1647) como monumento aos Indios Tarairiú do Rio Grande do Norte,” Ethnos: Revista brasileira de ethnohistória 3 (1998): 1-21. In addition to Baro, Jacob de Groot and Jan Strass also served as woudopers in WIC service. Unfortunately, the careers of these two individuals were very short-lived and not well documented. For a short description of De Groot and Strass see Nederlanders in Brazilië, 210 and 227, note 15. De Groot seems to have been killed during an expedition in December 1645. See LPB, Inv. No. 61: General Missive of the WIC Government in Recife to the Directors of the WIC Chamber in Zeeland, February 27, 1646. It is unclear if Baro was actually an ethnic Dutchman.
was hired by the WIC to replace the deceased Rabe, Baro was therefore already a seasoned intercultural diplomat.322

On April 25, 1646, barely three weeks after Rabe’s murder, the High Council dispatched the experienced Baro to contact the Tarairiu “king” Nhanduí of the Rio Grande Tarairius. Hoping that “king” Nhanduí would prevent his people from avenging Rabe’s death, the Recife officials explained by letter to Nhanduí that the murder of Rabe was an act of a few irresponsible European soldiers who would be duly punished. Baro was to present and translate this letter to Nhanduí, even though Baro reportedly only spoke Tupi and not the difficult Tarairiu tongue. Finally, the authorities ordered Baro to bring a Tarairiu delegation to Recife for a diplomatic visit in order to keep the Indians loyal to the WIC and to introduce them to several newly arrived members of the High Council.323

An account by one Pierre Moreau, a personal secretary to one of the members of the High Council, describes the visit of a Tarairiu delegation to Recife following Baro’s expedition to Nhanduí. According to Moreau, the skilful Indian envoys began the

322 In the only surviving account of Baro’s diary, the contemporary French scholar Morisot described in a footnote that Baro arrived in Brazil in 1617 aboard a Dutch vessel. See Relation du Voyage de Rouloix Baro, in: Relations véritables et curieuses de Lisle de Madagascar, et du Bresil, avec l’histoire de la derniere guerre faite au Bresil, entre les Portugais les Hollandois; trois relations d’Egypte, et une du Royaume de Perse (Paris: A. Courbe, 1651), 247. See also Teensma, “Roelof Baro’s Tarairiu-monument,” for Baro’s activities before 1646. For his role in the truce between the Ceará Indians and the WIC in 1645 see DN, Inv. No. 71: September 8, October 12, 16, 21, December 4, 20, 21, 31, all in 1645. On the mocambos, see Mary Karasch, “Zumbi of Palmares: Challenging the Portuguese Colonial Order,” in: Kenneth J. Andrien, ed. The Human Tradition in Colonial Latin America The Human Tradition around the World 5 (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2002): 104-120.

323 DN, Inv. No. 71: April 25, 1646. For the introduction of the Tarairiu to the recently arrived new members of the High Council, see LPB, Inv. No. 62: General Missive from the WIC Government to the Heeren XIX, June 21, 1646. Teensma, “Roelof Baro’s Tarairiu-monument,” 361, argues that Baro only spoke Tupi.
meeting with WIC officials by protesting Jacob Rabe’s death and by clearing him of any wrongdoing against colonists. Indicating that they knew of Garstman’s role, the Tarairiu diplomats questioned Garstman’s motives for assassinating Rabe. The Indian delegates pointed out that their people’s attacks on colonial plantations and settlements in the Rio Grande coastal region were justified because the WIC had often refused to provide the Tarairius with food supplies and trade goods when the latter were in need of them. As far as Rabe’s treasure of gold and silver concerned, the Tarairiu envoys told the Company authorities that Garstman and his men “could have had it if they only would have asked for it since we do not care for it anyway.” Even if Rabe had been guilty of stealing possessions from Portuguese colonists, he should have “been sentenced according to Dutch customs” but not murdered. Because they considered Rabe as “one of their own principal leaders” whom they “loved more than one hundred men,” the Tarairiu diplomats requested that Garstman be delivered to them so that they could implement their own form of justice. Ominously, the Tarairius informed the High Council “they wanted to stay friends with the Dutch, but they also wanted to have Garstman, so that they could kill him.”

Worried Company officials responded that “Garstman was a prominent military officer, and that they were consequently powerless to deliver him to the Tarairius.” The High Council refused to consider the Tarairiu demand because the Rabe murder involved the killing of a European by another European within the confines of colonial society. Accommodating the Tarairiu request would have implied a strong erosion of WIC

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324 Pierre Moreau, Klare en Waarachtige Beschrijving van de Leste Beroerten en Afval der Portuguezen in Brasil Translated from the French by J.H. Glazemaker (Amsterdam, 1652), 58-59. Moreau, a Walloon-native, served as personal secretary of Michiel van Goch, one of the High Councilors in Recife in the late 1640s. For Van Goch, see Dutch in Brazil, 266-267.
authority and jurisdiction, since the Tarairius were considered to be outside of the Dutch colonial order. Garstman instead would be given a trial that corresponded to his social status as a high military officer. However, in order to avoid the breakdown of the strategic Tarairiu-WIC alliance, Dutch colonial authorities attempted to assure the Tarairius that they took the murder of Rabe seriously. To emphasize their sincerity, the High Councilors before the Tarairiu embassy dramatically paraded the bound prisoner Garstman. Nevertheless, the Tarairiu envoys were disappointed, and on leaving Recife, the visitors warned the Dutch that they would soon regret their refusal to surrender Garstman. According to Moreau, an unnamed number of Tarairius “defected from Jan Dary [Nhanduí], broke their alliance with the Dutch, and aligned themselves with the Portuguese, all because of the death of Jacob Rabe and because they had not delivered Garstman into their hands.”

In order to maintain the support of the Tarairius at a time when the Dutch were threatened by the ongoing Portuguese rebellion, the High Council dispatched Baro again to Nhanduí in the spring and summer of 1647. Fortunately, Baro’s journal of this expedition has been preserved in a contemporary French translation, and his detailed notes provide not only a lot of ethnographic information about the Tarairius, but especially throw light upon Baro’s attitudes toward these Indians. Although Baro had been in frequent contact with the Tarairius and even spoke their difficult language, his notes clearly showed that his relationship with the Tarairius was anything but amicable. For instance, on April 26, 1647, a telling incident occurred between Baro and Muroti, one

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Moreau, *Klare en Waerachtige Beschrijvinge*, 58-59. For the passage about the bound Garstman, see Arnoldus Montanus, *De Nieuwe en Onbekende Weereld: of Beschrijving van America en ’t Zuid-Land* (Amsterdam: Jacob Meurs, 1671), 515.
of the sons of Nhanduí, who had intercepted Baro en route to guide the European envoy to his father’s town.326

When they had crossed the Mompabu River, some of Muroti’s Tarairius asked Baro for permission to kill livestock belonging to the nearby rancher Andre Claessen. Baro refused and told them that there were plenty of game animals in the woods. Baro “threatened to bind on a tree the first one who would try.” But he failed to impress the Tapuyas, who replied that they would go to Claessen’s corral anyway and obtain what cattle they needed. Baro again resorted to threats, leading the Tarairius to taunts: “‘And how would you treat us then? How will you and the Dutch treat us? Because even if we have committed something bad, … you will always come back to us and make peace afterwards.’” Baro then noted, “to show how little they cared for what I had just told them, they entered the aforementioned corral and took two cows that they wanted to kill. I addressed Muroti, advising him that I would complain about this to his father, that I had not planned for my encounter with him to be marred by bad behavior. I pledged [to Muroti] that whenever any of them would be proceeding down to the [WIC] fort in Rio Grande without carrying the appropriate evidence of being sent by Jandui [Nhanduí], that

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I would arrest them and punish them at my discretion. Upon this, Muroti did not answer and as it was getting dark, we all went to sleep.”

When Baro finally arrived in Nhanduí’s camp in the *sertão* of Rio Grande in late May, Baro again revealed his irritation and uneasiness with the Tarairius. During his initial conversation with Nhanduí on May 26, Baro learned that the Portuguese had recently given the Indians better quality goods than the Dutch. Baro was taken aback by this criticism: “I did not know how to respond to him, feeling compelled to ask him if he had only asked me to come in order to show the nice presents that he had been given by the Portuguese, and [whether] he wanted to break with us against his promise.” Several days later, on May 29, Nhanduí complained to Baro that he was not like Jacob Rabe, a man who had always supplied the Tarairius with plentiful amounts of food and presents. Baro retorted that “Rabe was a man of ill-repute who was hated by all and those that knew him.” Referring to Rabe’s violent death, Baro even told Nhanduí “I do not plan to be like him fearing that I would end my life just like him.” Hereupon Nhanduí angrily replied “Jacob Rabe had more power than you had and he was always a good commander.” Baro snapped back: “It was good that Jacob Rabe died because if he would still be alive, he would have been obliged to continue his campaigns of plunder and extortion.” Realizing that this conversation was turning into an argument, Nhanduí eventually defused the tense situation by inviting Baro to a meal of fruit and manioc. But despite Nhanduí’s gesture of hospitality, this incident strongly suggested that Baro rejected Rabe’s close association with the Tarairius.328

327 *Relação da viagem de Roulox Baro*, 93.

328 *Relação da viagem de Roulox Baro*, 97-98 (May 26 meeting), 99-100 (May 29 meeting).
Arguments aside, most Tarairius sought to remain allied with the WIC. This was less because of Baro’s diplomacy than because of fighting between the Tarairius and neighboring native peoples; Nhanduí needed the Dutch more than the WIC needed the Tarairius. Surrounded by a large number of Indian enemies, some of who were supported by the Portuguese rebels, Nhanduí asked Baro to supply the Tarairius with military support as soon as possible. After Baro returned to Recife in August 1647, the WIC officials initially refused to provide such extensive military support; the Dutch needed all their resources to fight the Portuguese guerillas and they disdained the Tarairius as “a Barbaric Nation.” It was only after Baro warned that the Tarairius were threatening to come down from the sertão into the coastal region of Rio Grande to plunder colonial farms and plantations that the High Council resolved to send more substantial aid in the form of some WIC soldiers. In addition, in December 1647 the High Council responded positively to Baro’s request from the sertão to supply the Tarairius with a large amount of gunpowder, lead, cloth, “500 fish hooks, 12 axes, 24 pairs of shoes, 1 psalm book, and a trumpet.”

Although Baro provided Nhanduí and his people with military support, he was unable to turn the tide against the “Pajucu, Kurrejujeca, and Jawariwaris,” enemies that had surrounded the Tarairius. In early February 1648 Baro reported that these peoples were pushing the Tarairius into the coastal region of Rio Grande. Moreover, Baro complained that many of the WIC soldiers who had come to support the Tarairius, had

329 On Nhanduí’s pleas for military support and Baro’s diplomacy, see Moreau, *Klare en Waarachtige Beschrijvinge*, 61-62; Montanus, *Nieuwe en Onbekende Weereld*, 516. For the initial refusal of the Council to refuse military support to the Tarairius, see DN, Inv. No. 72: August 29, 1647. For their change in policy, see DN, Inv. No. 72: September 5, 10, 21 (WIC soldiers sent to Nhanduí; December 19 (goods and psalm book), all in 1647. See also Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 530.
too quickly returned to Fort Ceulen. In spite of all these problems, Baro continued to fulfill his services as liaison between the WIC and the Tarairius. In April 1648 he was instrumental in bringing several hundred Tarairiu warriors to Recife where the High Council deployed them in an unsuccessful attack on Portuguese positions outside the coastal city. This would be Baro’s last contribution. In August, 1648, he suddenly petitioned the High Council to be “relieved from his services regarding the Tapuijas.” Baro must have had important reasons to step down, because the Council granted his petition without question and replaced the experienced woudloper with one Pieter Persijn.330

Available sources do not explain why Baro unexpectedly ended his long career as backwoods-explorer and intercultural diplomat. Perhaps Baro simply felt too weak for the strenuous activities of traveling back and forth between the coast and the hot and dry hinterlands of Rio Grande; he apparently died of natural causes in Brazil shortly after his resignation in August 1648. In August 1650, the Heeren XIX ordered the High Council to provide information to Baro’s widow in the Republic about the state of salaries that had never been paid to “Roeloff Barro (former Commander of the Brazilians) … who had died in the year 1648.” Baro may also have concluded that the Dutch presence in northeastern Brazil was untenable. By the summer of 1648 the influence of the WIC and their Indian allies was confined to the coastline, while Portuguese guerillas and their Indian and African allies were firmly in control of the interior. Although the Portuguese

330 DN, Inv. No. 72: February 3 (Indian enemies of the Tarairius); March 18 and 31, April 24 (Baro supplies 500 Tarairius and Tarairiu envoys to WIC forces for a military campaign); August 19, 1648 (resignation of Baro and appointment of Persijn). The Tarairius were deployed in the first battle of Guararapes, outside Recife, in April 1648. After the Tarairius suffered from a dysentery epidemic they were send back to Rio Grande. See Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 530.
rebels often faced as many shortages and hardships as their Dutch enemies, it was clear to most participants that after three years of heavy fighting that the WIC had effectively failed to put down the Portuguese revolt.\footnote{DNA, OWIC, Inv. No. 10: Letters sent by the Heeren XIX to the WIC Government in Brazil, 1646-1657: August 30, 1650. In December 1650 the High Council promised the Heeren XIX to soon send over this information on behalf of Baro’s widow. See DN, Inv. No. 74: December 14, 1650.}

A final explanation for Baro’s resignation was his obvious dislike of the Tarairius. As his diary of his expedition to the Tarairius in 1647 revealed, Baro did not refrain from openly criticizing the Tarairiu raids against Rio Grande colonists. Baro clearly did not follow in the footsteps of his predecessor Jacob Rabe, who had not only tolerated the Tarairiu attacks, but who had even profited from their depredations. While Baro probably enjoyed certain aspects of his work as intercultural diplomat in WIC service, such as a small salary and a certain status as a valuable colonial official, his annoyance with the Tarairius during the 1647 expedition strongly suggest that this experienced \textit{woudloper}, unlike Rabe, did not very much want to associate himself with the Tarairius. Baro viewed the Tarairius as wild and uncontrollable people, with whom he would deal only under orders from the Council.

Baro’s successor, Pieter Persijn, shared similar attitudes towards the Tarairius. As with Rabe and Baro, not much is known about Persijn’s career before his appointment as official WIC liaison with these allies in August 1648. In December 1649, Persijn described himself as an Antwerp native, aged 25, who had enlisted in WIC service in 1638. Perhaps at 14 years, he was a cabin boy aboard a WIC vessel. Coming to manhood in Brazil, Persijn had married Gonsalo Rodrigo. The ethnic background of Rodrigo is...
unknown, but she may have been a Tupi Indian or a mestizo. There is no documentary information suggesting that Persijn was involved with Indians before 1648.

It is likely, though, that Persijn was very familiar with the *sertão*, the dry hinterlands of northeastern Brazil, for he served as an explorer of mines in the backcountry. Significantly, in January and February 1649, Persijn accompanied a special WIC expedition into the interior of Rio Grande to an abandoned Portuguese mine that was supposed to be filled with precious minerals. Although this expedition was unsuccessful, the High Council on several other occasions during the late 1640s and early 1650s instructed Persijn to investigate possible mines in the mountainous interior of Rio Grande. Like Baro, Persijn was therefore probably a *woudloper* whose familiarity with the *sertão* made him a candidate for service as an intercultural diplomat to the Tarairius.332

Persijn performed his services as “commander of the Tappoijers” with as much reluctance as did his immediate predecessor. While he maintained generally friendly relations with Nhanduí and the Tarairius, Persijn never closely associated with the Rio Grande natives. For instance, in March 1649, the High Council criticized Persijn for not doing enough to prevent the Tarairius from plundering the colonial farms on the coast of Rio Grande. After commander Denninger at Fort Ceulen complained to the Council that Persijn and his platoon of four WIC soldiers spent most of their time among the colonists rather than among the Tarairius, the Council ordered Denninger to instruct Persijn to

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332 The WIC soldier Peter Hansen Hajstrup documented Persijn’s role in the mining expedition of January 1649. See Ibold, ed. *Das "Memorial und Jurenal" des Peter Hansen Hajstrup* 86-89. For other mining expeditions of Persijn, see DN, Inv. No. 73: October 18, December 21, 1649; and the “Journal by Jan Hoeck about the Expedition to the Silver Mines in Rio Grande, January-February 1650,” in DNA, Acquisitions, First Section, Inv. No. 1028, Part XL, Number 2 (1906): Folios 12-20.
reside either among the Tarairius or at Fort Ceulen, so that the Indian agent and his men could quickly mobilize in case the Tarairius raided the colonial settlements.³³³

Unlike Rabe, who was clearly fascinated by Indians in general and the Tarairius in particular, Persijn, like Baro, continued to fulfill his duties as intercultural diplomat of the WIC because it provided him with a monthly salary as well as some prestige in colonial society. Persijn was especially sensitive about his status as colonial officer. He occasionally complained to the High Council about not being paid adequately. In October, 1649, Persijn petitioned the Recife authorities “to be compensated with the same amount Roeloff Baro had earned, because he [Persijn] has now served the Company for a long time.” Because of his services as explorer of mines, the Company also supplied Persijn, at his own expense, with an African slave “to carry the instruments for the search of the mine in Rio Grande.” When this unnamed African slave ran away several months later, Persijn asked the High Council to send him a new one. Reflecting his belief that a slave provided him with some status, Persijn specifically pointed out that he wanted to use the slave not only for the work in the mines but also “for his own services.”³³⁴

Although Persijn did not reside among the Indians and showed more interest in mining and obtaining respectability in colonial society than in gaining prestige among the Tarairius, the available documentary sources reveal that he nevertheless took his role as WIC liaison to them seriously. Whenever the High Council ordered him to travel to Nhanduí and his people in the sertão of Rio Grande, Persijn complied and distributed WIC presents among the Tarairius to maintain their friendship with the Dutch. In

³³³ DN, Inv. No. 73: March 17, 1649.
³³⁴ DN, Inv. No. 74: October 18 (request for compensation and a slave); December 23 (request for new slave), 1649.
December 1649, Persijn reported to his superiors in Recife that he had with him no less than 400 Tarairiu warriors and “a hundred Brazilians of the Carregesier Nation” for an attack on Portuguese rebels. Similarly, in March, 1650, the High Council responded to a request from Persijn to supply him with “fifty knives, twelve axes,” as well as “an amount of beads, fishhooks, blades, combs, rings, mirrors, and sword-pieces to make arrows from,” so that Persijn would be able to negotiate a truce between the Tarairius and the “Tapuijas” from the province of Ceará.335

Persijn also played an important role in the development of cross-cultural trade between the Tarairius and European colonists during the early 1650s. While Tarairiu-European relations had previously been shaped by mutual suspicion, in the last years of the WIC presence in Brazil interactions between the Tarairius and the European colonists in Rio Grande became somewhat friendlier as the two sides realized the usefulness of material exchange. This improvement in cross-cultural relations was primarily caused by the withdrawal of Portuguese guerillas from Rio Grande as well as by the need for slaves and horses by the colonists of the isolated frontier province. Since the Tarairius frequently obtained both valuable commodities during raids against the Portuguese, the Rio Grande natives offered to supply their European neighbors with African slaves and horses in return for material goods that the Tarairius desired. Because of his regular interactions with the Tarairius, Persijn facilitated this intercultural trade during the early 1650s. Likewise, the Tarairius dispatched their own negotiators to the Rio Grande colonists to obtain valuable trade goods. For instance, in the spring of 1651 the commander of Fort Ceulen reported to the High Council that “the escort of the Tapuijas

335 DN, Inv. No. 74: December 21, 1649 (Persijn and 400 Tarairius); March 12, 1650 (truce).
Hr. Persijn again had come down from the sertão bringing with him the new King of the Tapuijas who promised to exchange several horses against some small items.”

Persijn continued to facilitate this trade until the end of 1653. On December 18, the High Council announced that a close associate of Persijn, Sigismundus van Waldauwen, had been performing Persijn’s duties for some time. It is unknown what happened to Persijn. Like Baro, Persijn may have been fed up with the “savage” Tarairius. On the other hand, Persijn’s important role in the burgeoning intercultural trade system as well as his interest in finding a mine in the interior of Rio Grande make it unlikely that he would suddenly resign his position as intercultural diplomat. In any case, Van Waldauwen’s career as “escort of the Tapuijas” was extremely short-lived, since the WIC officially surrendered its possessions in Brazil to the Portuguese in Recife in early January 1654. Moreover, in mid-December, 1653, the High Council decreased Van Waldauwen’s salary, because he “had not much to do at the moment.” Although it is unknown what happened to Van Waldauwen, it is probable that he joined most other WIC personnel during the spring of 1654 in seeking a new start in the Caribbean or in returning to the Republic. In the meantime, the Tarairius retreated into the interior after they learned of the Dutch surrender of Brazil. While some Tarairius eventually settled down in an aldeia in Pernambuco in 1661, many others continued to fight against the Portuguese until the late seventeenth century. Left without the important military support of the Dutch, the Tarairius were eventually defeated in the “War against the Barbarians”, as the Portuguese called their frontier war against the former Indian allies of the WIC. Although other Indian communities adopted some Tarairiu refugees, the Tarairius

336 DN, Inv. No. 75: June 14, 1651 (quotation). For the intercultural trade in Rio Grande in the early 1650s, see Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 530-531.
effectively disappeared as an independent polity and people by the late seventeenth century.337

In retrospect, Jacob Rabe was the only European mediator who personally associated very closely with the Tarairius. While Roelof Baro and Pieter Persijn also were in frequent contact with the Tarairius, these two individuals, unlike Rabe, never lived among them. Whereas Rabe took a personal interest in the culture of the Tarairius, even writing a short ethnography of them, Baro and Persijn considered most of the Tarairiu customs repugnant. The biggest difference between Rabe and his successors was that Rabe was willing to join the Tarairius in their frequent raids against European colonists in Rio Grande. Participating in these attacks not only provided Rabe with material goods, it also granted him prestige and status among the Tarairius, as was clear from the conversation between Baro and Nhanduí in 1648. Most colonists could not tolerate the blurring of cultural boundaries between Europeans and the Tarairius. Although the High Council saw the Tarairius as useful military allies, most colonists and officials simultaneously considered the Tarairius wild and uncontrollable savages who should be kept at arms’ length. As the violent death of Rabe made dramatically clear, Europeans saw anybody who crossed this cultural divide as a threat to the colonial order.

337 DNA, First Section, Hof van Holland, Inv. No. 5252: Criminele Papieren Rakende Hend. Haaks en het overgaan van Brazil, 1654: DN, December 18, 1653. For the Tarairius after 1654, see Van den Boogaart, “Infernal Allies,” 531; Reformed Church, 217; Teensma, “Roelof Baro’s Tarairiu-monument,” 368-369. For the “War against the Barbarians”, see M.I. Pires, Guerra dos bárbaros: resistência indígena e conflictos no nordeste colonial (Recife: Fundarpe, 1990).
5. European Mediators in the Frontier Provinces of Maranhão and Ceará

A final category of cross-cultural diplomats in Dutch Brazil was made up of colonists and officials who facilitated WIC relations with the native peoples in the frontier provinces of Ceará and Maranhão. Unlike the sugar growing regions of Pernambuco, Itamaracá, and Paraíba, the colonial provinces, of Ceará and Maranhão were of economically marginal importance for Europeans. The main reason Portuguese, French, and Dutch traders were attracted to Ceará and Maranhão was the intercultural trade with local Indian nations in brazilwood, amber, cotton, tobacco, and Indian slaves. By the time of the WIC invasion of Brazil, the provinces of Ceará and Maranhão only had a few sugar mills. In addition, while Indians were outnumbered by European colonists and African slaves in the sugar growing regions of the Northeast, the overwhelming majority of the population in Ceará and Maranhão consisted of native peoples of Tupi speaking and non-Tupi speaking “Tapuya” groups.338

Since the WIC was mostly interested in the sugar trade, the Heeren XIX and the High Council were initially not very attracted to Ceará and Maranhão. However, when delegations of Ceará Tupis visited Recife and Rio Grande in the fall of 1637, offering a military and economic alliance if the WIC attacked the Portuguese fort on their coast, Governor Maurits and the High Council saw an opportunity to expand the Dutch influence in Brazil at minimal cost to the Company. The Recife government subsequently dispatched an expedition to Ceará that quickly succeeded in occupying the Portuguese coastal fort. Having captured Ceará, the WIC government in Recife also developed an

interest in Maranhão. Encouraged by reports from the colonist-adventurers Gedeon Morris de Jonge and Johan Maxwell that Maranhão provided access to numerous “Tapuya” Indian slaves, the riches of the Amazon Valley, and the silver mines in the Andes, Maurits sent a WIC force that occupied the strategic island São Luis off the coast of Maranhão in the fall of 1641, during a time when the Portuguese were preoccupied by their struggle for independence from Habsburg Spain.339

Although the documents do not usually mention whether the official intermediaries spoke Tupi or any other regional Indian languages, their frequent interactions with native peoples suggest that they learned some of the native languages themselves. For instance, the previously mentioned De Jonge was appointed as Commander of Brazilians in Ceará in January 1641 because “of his experience and knowledge of the languages” of the local Indians. When Maurits and the Council instructed De Jonge to lead the attack on São Luis in Maranhão in October 1641, they hoped that he would use his “knowledge of the Indian language” to make “the Indian Nations more disposed to us.” It is also probable that many Ceará and Maranhão Indians themselves were able to speak Portuguese due to the presence of Portuguese colonists and Jesuits in the area since the sixteenth century. In any case, the WIC sources do not

339 On the Ceará Indian delegations, see DN, Inv. No. 68: September 26 and October 17, 1637. For the WIC conquest of Ceará, see Dutch in Brazil, 85. On the reports by Gedeon Morris de Jonge and Maxwell, see the “Report from Gedeon Morris de Jonge, October 22, 1637,” in: DNA, OWIC, Inv. No. 46: Reports, Journals, and Descriptions Relating to Brazil, Angola, Tobago, etc., 1636-1643. See also “Short Account relating to the Maranan [Maranhão] petitioned on February 3, 1640, by Gedeon Morris and Jean Maxwell,” in: OWIC, Inv. No. 46: Reports, Journals, and Descriptions Relating to Brazil, Angola, Tobago, etc., 1636-1643.” In these remarkable reports both authors related that they had lived in Maranhão before the WIC conquest and that they had personally witnessed how the survivors of a Spanish expedition from Peru had reached Maranhão through an overland route. For the WIC conquest of Maranhão, see Dutch in Brazil, 108. See also, João Capistrano de Abreu, Chapters of Brazil’s Colonial History, 1500-1800 Translated from the Portuguese by Arthur Brakel. Preface by Fernando A. Novais and introduction by Stuart B. Schwartz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 105.
indicate that communication was a major obstacle in facilitating relations between the Dutch and the Ceará and Maranhão natives.340

While De Jonge and other local Company authorities responsible for Indian affairs in Ceará and Maranhão were initially successful in securing friendly relations with the various Tupi and “Tapuya” Indian groups, holding meetings and distributing Company gifts among them, the cross-cultural alliance was eroded by the WIC demand for local Indians as forced laborers in the nearby salt-pans and sugar mills. De Jonge had discovered these saltpans, and in the face of a serious labor shortage he hoped to exploit the already existing regional intertribal slave trade to obtain salt-workers. In addition, the increasing use of “Tapuya” Indian slaves in the sugar mills throughout northeastern Brazil also led to growing irritation among the Ceará and Maranhão natives. Because the Dutch-Portuguese wars in the Southern Atlantic had interrupted a steady flow of African slaves to the sugar growing regions in northeastern Brazil, planters turned to Indian slaves in order to maintain their production. Maurits and the High Council reluctantly supported the planters in this, since a profitable sugar trade supplied the WIC with much needed revenues. At the same time, the WIC government was careful not to alienate their strategic Indian allies. The colonial authorities in Recife therefore only allowed local officials in Ceará and Maranhão to enslave “Tapuya” Indians from the interior of these provinces, since these non-Tupi speaking natives were viewed by Europeans as irredeemable savages who practiced cannibalism. For instance, in the summer of 1639,

340 LPB, Inv. No. 56: Missive from the WIC Government in Recife to the Heeren XIX, January 10, 1641 (appointment of Gedeon Morris de Jonge); and the “Secret Instructions from the WIC Government in Recife to the Commanders of the WIC Expedition to Capture the Maranhão Province, October 28, 1641.” LPB, Inv. No. 57: Missive from Gedeon Morris to the WIC Government in Recife [?], April 7, 1642, implies that Gedeon Morris was appointed as Commander of Brazilians in Ceará.
the German scientist Georg Marcgraf participated in an expedition to the Ceará interior, the primary goal of which was to subdue hostile “Tapuyas” and sell them into slavery.\(^{341}\)

Despite these efforts to maintain the Ceará and Maranhão Indians’ friendship, pro-Dutch Indians grew increasingly angry with their Dutch allies for exploiting them as cheap workers in the colonial economy. Some of the WIC commander-diplomats played a large role in the disaffection of the Ceará and Maranhão Indians. For instance, when Maurits and the High Council sent an officer to Ceará to supervise the resettlement of Ceará Tupis to *aldeias* in Rio Grande in August 1641, De Jonge refused to cooperate because he needed 150 Ceará Tupis for the panning of salt along a nearby river. In addition, he claimed, “to need people here to work in the fields, so that we will not go hungry.” Even when in 1642, the WIC government in Recife ordered the abolition of all Indian slavery in Ceará and Maranhão for fear of upsetting the friendly relationship with the Tupis and “Tapuyas”, the WIC commander Bas, stationed at São Luis in Maranhão, declared that the Maranhão colonists would not accept such abolition, since “there are no other slaves in the Maransos [Maranhão] except Brazilians.” Bas warned that if all the


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Indian slaves were freed, the economy would collapse “because the free Brazilians do not wish to hire themselves out for a daily salary.”

Faced with the pressure to provide cheap labor, the Maranhão Indians eventually broke off their alliance with the Dutch. An Indian revolt against the WIC was triggered by a devastating smallpox epidemic that heavily depopulated many Indian villages in Ceará and Maranhão in the fall of 1641. Feeling betrayed by their Dutch allies, who did not suffer so much from the deadly disease, the Maranhão Tupis joined forces with some Portuguese colonists and Jesuits who had remained in the area. The Portuguese and Indians surrounded the WIC fort on the island of São Luis in October 1642. Although the fort managed to hold out for more than a year, thanks to European and Tupi Indian military reinforcements from Ceará, the WIC garrison exhausted its supplies and evacuated in January, 1644. However, by that time, Ceará Tupis had also revolted against the WIC officials. When the evacuees from São Luis stopped over at the WIC fort in Ceará in February, 1644, the crews found no survivors among the casualties in the Company fort. While his body was never found, the available evidence strongly indicates that De Jonge was killed by the Ceará Tupis, because of his prominent role in the labor abuse of the Ceará Indians.

342 LPB, Inv. No. 56: Letter from Gedeon Morris in Fort Sebastian in the Province of Ceará to the WIC Government in Recife, August 4, 1641. LPB, Inv. No. 57: Missive from the WIC Government in Recife to the Heeren XIX, September 24, 1642 (quotation from Bas).

343 For the smallpox epidemic among the Ceará and Maranhão Indians, see LPB, Inv. No. 57: Missive from Gedeon Morris to the WIC Government in Recife, April 7, 1642. Morris de Jonge claimed that within four months no less than 1,000 free and enslaved Indians had died due to the epidemic. Similarly high casualties of the epidemic are provided by the letter that Johan Maxwell wrote from Maranhão to the WIC government on July 18, 1642. This letter is found at LPB, Inv. No. 57. The Indian-Portuguese revolt against the Dutch in Maranhão is discussed by Barlaeus, Nederlandsch Brazilië onder het Bewind van Johan Maurits, 312-313. For the motives of the Ceará Indians to attack the Dutch, see DN, Inv. No. 70: March 21 and 23, 1644. For the likely murder of Gedeon Morris de Jonge by Ceará Indians, see Barlaeus, Nederlandsch Brazilië.
Because Recife did not want to be drawn into a costly frontier war that it could ill afford in the face of continuing Portuguese resistance south of Pernambuco (not to mention in Angola), Governor Maurits and the High Council cautiously attempted to maintain friendly relations with the various Tupi and “Tapuya” groups in Ceará and Maranhão. Intercultural diplomats such as the Tarairiu “King” Nhanduí, the Potiguar Indian leader Anthonio Paraupaba, and the European backwoods-explorer Roelof Baro played an important role in this conciliatory policy by personally meeting Ceará Indian leaders and bringing them over to Recife for talks with WIC officials. These diplomatic overtures were somewhat successful, and during the mid-1640s a contingent of Ceará Tupis even served on a WIC expedition on the São Francisco River in the province of Sergipe, south of Recife. Also, to avoid revolts among the Indian peoples throughout northeastern Brazil, the WIC authorities issued new ordinances prohibiting the enslavement of both Tupis and “Tapuyas”. To signify the sincerity of their policies, Company officials arrested Johan Maxwell, the associate of De Jonge, at the Caribbean island of Saint Kitts in the spring of 1644, upon learning that he had sold a number of Tupi Indian slaves from Maranhão to English and French colonists on that small Caribbean island.344

344 For WIC diplomacy to the Ceará and Maranhão Indians, see DN, Inv. No. 70: September 16 (Nhanduí), October 18, and December 29, 1644; 23 January 1645 (Nhanduí). DN, Inv. No. 71: September 8-9 (Baro), October 12 (Baro), December 4, 20, 21, 31 (Baro diplomacy), all in 1645. In 1646 Baro attempted to resettle a group of Ceará Tupis to Rio Grande, but the Ceará Tupis eventually distrusted the Dutch. See DN, Inv. No. 71: January 2, 3, 12, March 19, 24, all in 1646. For Paraupaba’s diplomacy, see DN, Inv. No. 72: March 4, 18, and April 3, 1648. On the Ceará Tupis in the São Francisco River campaign, see LPB, Inv. No. 63: Letter from James Henderson in Penedo do Rio de São Francisco to the WIC Government in Recife, January 1, 16,
Following several years of careful diplomacy, the High Council initiated a new colonization project in Ceará after they obtained information from a captured Portuguese individual in the fall of 1648 about a possible silver mine in the Ceará interior. Concerned about provoking the Ceará native peoples again, the Recife authorities appointed the prominent colonist and official Mathias Beck as supreme commander of the mining expedition. Beck had been an independent merchant in Recife since at least the summer of 1635. Beck’s sugar mill in Pernambuco included no less than 200 African slaves. Although he had no direct experience in interacting with Indians, Beck’s prominent social status as a wealthy merchant, city magistrate, and civic militia commander in Recife made him an attractive candidate for command. Because of his membership in the colonial elite of Dutch Brazil, Beck was expected to successfully keep order and control over the 150 soldiers, 62 sailors, 25 African slaves, and several miners who formed the WIC project in Ceará.

29, all in 1647. See also DN, Inv. No. 73: March 16, 1649. On the episode of Johan Maxwell and his attempts to sell Indian slaves in the Caribbean, see LPB, Inv. No. 59: Missive from Gilles Vernant from the Island of St Christoffel [St. Kitts] to WIC Officials, March 10, 1644. The WIC official Gilles Vernant eventually brought Maxwell to Recife in June 1644, including 18 Indian slaves that he had managed to free from English and French colonists at St. Kitts. See DN, Inv. No. 70: June 11, 1644. Maxwell evaded arrest by escaping from the Recife prison in early 1645. See LPB, Inv. No. 60: General Missive from the WIC Government in Recife to the Heeren XIX, February 13, 1645. St. Kitts was at this time jointly ruled by English and French officials. See David P. Henige, Colonial Governors from the Fifteenth Century to the Present: A Comprehensive List (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), 167. For the ongoing Portuguese-Dutch wars in Angola, see Ratelband, Nederlanders in West Africa.

345 GAA, Notarial Archive, Inv. No. 414: August 8, 1636, folio 142 (Beck as free merchant in Recife). DN, Inv. No. 70: June 2, 1643 (Beck appointed as Recife city magistrate). For Beck as civic militia commander see DN, Inv. No. 71: April 26, 27, 28, all in 1646. During this time Beck supported the WIC officer Georg Garstman who had ordered the murder of Jacob Rabe, the WIC negotiator to the Tarairiu Indians in Rio Grande. For Rabe’s murder see the section in this chapter dealing with the Tarairiu negotiators. Ibold, ed. Das "Memorial und Jurenal" des Peter Hansen Hajstrup (1624-1672), 77-79 (Beck’s sugar mill and 200 slaves). On the number of people on the WIC project in Ceará, see LPB, Inv. No. 65: Journal of Mathias Beck from Ceará, March 20-April 10, 1649: entry of March 20. See also Krommen, Mathias Beck
To make up for his inexperience in intercultural diplomacy, Beck brought with him to Ceará several interpreters. One of his closest aides in this respect was a personal African slave named Domingo, who had a good command of the Tupi Indian language. In Ceará, Beck relied on Domingo’s linguistic skills. Beck also took with him several other experienced interpreters and mediators. Instead of employing individuals like De Jonge and Maxwell, who had been primarily interested in the economic exploitation of the natives, most intercultural diplomats on the 1649 expedition all shared a close association with the Reformed Church, which made them more reliable in the eyes of WIC authorities. The most influential negotiator of this group was the previously mentioned Protestant dominee Thomas Kemp, who had learned the Tupi language during his work as a missionary among the Rio Grande Tupis in the mid-1640s. In addition, the WIC expedition included Daniel Allaert, a lay-preacher who had instructed Tupi Indians in Pernambuco, and who was “experienced in the Brazilian language.”

The Company officials had also recruited the services of the Potiguar leader Caspar Paraupaba, the father of Anthonio Paraupaba. Like his son, Caspar had learned Dutch and had embraced Protestant Christianity during his stay in the Republic during the late 1620s. Significantly, Caspar had also informed the WIC about the location of a mine in Ceará during his visit to the United Provinces. The previously mentioned Tupi schoolmaster João Gonsalves also accompanied Kemp, Allaert, and Caspar Paraupaba to facilitate cross-cultural communication in Ceará. By including these experienced
intermediaries, the High Council not only expected to prevent any misunderstandings with the Ceará Indians, but also hoped to civilize these natives and incorporate them into an alliance with the Dutch.  

Mathias Beck and the dominee Thomas Kemp were the most prominent WIC mediators in Ceará from 1649 to 1654. Beck -- aided by the linguistic expertise of Kemp, Allaert, Domingo, and Caspar Paraupaba -- was somewhat successful in establishing diplomatic ties with the Ceará Indians. He frequently held personal meetings and official councils with local Tupi headmen. For instance, soon after the expedition’s arrival in Ceará in late March 1649, Beck held a major conference with the principal headmen of a group of 600 Tupi men, women, and children who had all come down to the coast to meet the newly arrived WIC commander.

Relying upon the translation services of Kemp, Allaert, and Domingo, Beck initially greeted the Tupi leaders aboard his ship, but after realizing that the Tupi headman Francisco Aragiba became seasick “because of the swinging of the ship”, Beck soon resumed the official negotiations with the Tupis on the Ceará coast. In these meetings Beck emphasized that the WIC had returned to Ceará to re-establish the alliance

346 LPB, Inv. No. 65: Journal of Mathias Beck: March 20 (Gaspar Paraupaba), March 22-23 (dominee Kemp and Tupi schoolmaster), April 4 (quote about Daniel Allaert), April 10 (Domingo). As a sign of good-will toward the Ceará Tupis the High Council sent a group of 61 Ceará Tupi warriors back to Ceará who had served in WIC campaigns during the mid-1640s (DN, Inv. No. 73: March 16, 1649). For Gonsalves as the Tupi schoolmaster see DN, Inv. No. 75: August 31, 1651.

347 The meeting with the 600 Tupis is mentioned in the entries of LPB, Inv. No. 65: Journal of Mathias Beck: entries of April 4-10, 1649. Beck’s official logbook of his stay in Ceará pays considerable attention to Indian affairs. At least one period (May 4-July 22, 1649) of his diary is missing in the OWIC archive in The Hague. See Reformed Church, 318. However, this missing period is partly covered by a summary of Beck’s diary that is preserved at the New York State Archives, Albany, New Netherland Project, Bontemantel Collection, Brazil Papers, 1624-1670: Inv. No. 1236: “Excerpts from the Journals of Mathys Beck, Director in Siara, respecting the silver mines, March 18, 1649-November 28, 1650.”
with the Indians in order to defeat the Portuguese and to provide the Tupis with trade goods. In addition, Beck promised the assembled Tupi headmen to end the destructive intertribal wars the Tupis were waging against the “Tapuya” nations that lived in the interior. Beck also informed the Tupis, many of who had been raised in the Jesuit aldeias in the early seventeenth century, that the Protestant dominee Kemp would work among their villages to hold religious services, baptize their children and marry their men and women. Afraid to upset the Tupis who were still skeptical of the WIC in the light of the exploitation of Tupi laborers in Ceará during the early 1640s, Beck only barely acknowledged that the WIC had also returned to find and exploit the silver mine that was supposedly located in the interior. To signify the sincere intentions of the WIC Beck distributed several prestigious gifts as well as official letters of friendship from the WIC and the States General among the Tupi leaders.348

After having listened to Beck’s declarations through the words of the interpreters, the Tupi headmen were generally sympathetic and enthusiastic. However, when the meeting had ended several Tupi leaders expressed disappointment at the small quantity and quality of WIC gifts. One principal leader, referred to as “João Amunijupitanga” in Beck’s diary, was frustrated that he had not received “a fine red scarlet cloth with gold embroidery” that he claimed “the High Council had promised to provide to every principal leader.” To indicate “that they had better clothes than the ones I gave them,” the Tupi leader even showed off to Beck one of his children dressed in “a fine scarlet red cloth embroidered with silver lines and buttons.” In addition, during the proceedings of the council, Beck’s African slave Domingo claimed to have overheard a conversation

among other Tupi headmen about a plan to attack the WIC expedition if they did not supply the Indians with enough gifts. Although most of the Tupi leaders eventually accepted the presents that Beck provided to them, it was clear that the Ceará Tupi headmen remained suspicious of the WIC, because the latter did not provide them with a generous supply of trade goods. Revealing the significance of generosity as a social value in Tupi societies, the local native leaders considered it insulting behavior, when an ally, who had access to valuable goods such as iron tools and clothing, did not supply its partners with these material items.349

Eventually Beck had more success in drawing the local natives closer to the Company by sending Tupi leaders and diplomatic envoys to Recife, where they were formally received and greeted by the WIC government. In late July, 1649, Beck instructed the lay preacher and interpreter Daniel Allaert to accompany a delegation of Ceará Tupis to Recife. By providing the Tupi headmen and envoys with official passes and boats to travel to the capital of Dutch Brazil, where they were provided with trade goods and prestigious clothes, Beck was able to persuade most Ceará Tupi communities to remain loyal to the WIC. However, the High Council itself disliked these frequent visits of Ceará Tupi envoys, because they strained the resources of the already weakly provided WIC headquarters in Recife. The Recife authorities were more concerned with their own immediate defenses against the Portuguese rebels and their Indian and African allies, who had effectively cut them off from the hinterland since the summer of 1645. As

a result, in February 1650 Beck promised to send “as few Brazilians [to Recife] as possible,” in the light of Recife’s more pressing problems.\(^{350}\)

Without the Recife authorities to fall back upon, Beck was forced to practice intercultural diplomacy with the limited means and trade goods he had available at his frontier-post on the Ceará coast. When some Tupi leaders heard rumors about a possible evacuation of the Dutch from Brazil in July 1649, Beck called several Indian leaders to the fort to persuade them that the WIC would win the war against the Portuguese in Brazil. In a meeting with Amunijupitanga and Captains Francisco Caijaba and Anthonio Siaraigoara on July 31, Beck boasted that “because of the large number of Dutch ships and yachts blocking the Portuguese coast and harbors, the King of Portugal is so afraid and anxious that he wished never to have started this war with us in Brazil.” Although Beck did not record how the Tupi headmen interpreted this story, most Ceará Tucus supported the WIC against the Portuguese because they feared the return of the Portuguese who had enslaved them in large numbers before the Dutch invasion of Brazil. Thus, when a Portuguese vessel reached the Camassi River in Ceará in the spring of 1650, in an attempt to undermine the WIC presence in Ceará, a group of Tucus ambushed the Portuguese and killed fifteen of the ship’s crewmembers. Beck was very impressed with this show of support for the WIC, and he instructed the barber-surgeon of the fort to care for the Tucus that had been wounded in the battle. In addition, he asked the High

\(^{350}\) DN, Inv. No. 73: October 17, 1649 (Ceará delegation visits Recife); LPB, Inv. No. 65: Journal of Mathias Beck from Ceará, July 23-September 9, 1649: entries of July 24 and 26 (4 Ceará envoys go to Recife, assisted by the interpreter Daniel Allaert). LPB, Inv. No. 66: Letter from Mathias Beck in Fort Schonenburch in Ceará to the WIC Government in Recife, February 27, 1650 (quotation). Despite Beck’s assurances, in May 1652 a delegation of four envoys from Ceará traveled again to Recife. See DN, Inv. No. 75: May 3, 1652.
Council to send him a “new red cloth with a hat” for the “principal Simon Caijabua” as a reward for leading the successful Indian attack.351

Beck was also optimistic about the implementation of a truce between the Ceará Tupis and the “Tapuya” nations that lived in the interior. During the large conference held in early April 1649, the Tupi leader Amunijupitanga and others had urged Beck to provide them with military support to crush their Tapuya enemies once and for all. But Beck, who had probably received instructions from Recife superiors to draw as many Indian nations into an alliance with the WIC as possible, rejected this proposal. The WIC commander instructed Amunijupitanga to “first of all bring to me the main leaders of the Tapuijhrs through friendship, and that I then would gain their friendship so that they would live together as good neighbors and sincere friends.” Although Amunijupitanga remained unwilling to seek a truce with his enemies, Beck persuaded another Tupi leader named Francisco Aragiba to travel to several Tapuya groups in the interior and to inform them of the peaceful intentions of the WIC. Unfortunately, this diplomatic mission did not accomplish much, because some of the “Tabaiaris” that had been contacted by Aragiba had recently aligned themselves with the Portuguese. Unfazed by this setback, Beck continued to seek a truce with the Ceará Tapuyas, and in March, 1650, Nhanduí, the main leader of the Rio Grande Tarairius, reported to WIC officials that “the heer Beck of Ceará has recently concluded peace with several nations of Tapuijas named Bajacu.” 352


352 LPB, Inv. No. 65: Journal of Mathias Beck: April 7 (Amunijupitanga); April 22, 30 (Aragiba diplomacy). LPB, Inv. No. 65: Letter from M. Beck in Fort Schoonenburch in Ceará to the WIC Government in Recife, May 22, 1649 (Aragiba result of his mission). DN, Inv. No. 74: 303
Beck’s attempts to develop diplomatic relations with the Ceará Indians were also supported by the arrival of the demoted military officer Georg Garstman in Ceará in September 1649. After having been found guilty of ordering the killing of the valuable Tarairiu negotiator Jacob Rabe in Rio Grande in 1646, Garstman had been expelled to the Republic. However, supported by influential colonists such as Mathias Beck, the resourceful Garstman succeeded in obtaining permission from metropolitan authorities to return to Brazil sometime in 1648. Upon his arrival in Recife, the irritated High Council dispatched him to join his friend Mathias Beck in Ceará and to assume the position of militia commander of the local WIC troops. Garstman’s presence in Ceará proved useful for Beck because some of the Tupi leaders had fond memories of Garstman as the main military officer of the WIC expedition that had driven the Portuguese from Ceará in 1637. In a letter to the High Council, Beck reported that the Tupis enthusiastically welcomed the arrival of Major Garstman, as they “expressed with great joy his return, and it is to be expected, that more people will come here [to the fort], because all of them say to live and die with the Dutch.” Although the available documents dealing with the WIC colonial project in Ceará are scarce after September 1649, it is probable that Beck used the experienced Garstman as a mediator during council meetings with the Ceará Indians.\footnote{353}

\footnotetext{353}{On Garstman’s ordeal after 1646, see my paper “The Murder of Jacob Rabe: Contesting High and Legal Authority in Colonial Northeastern Brazil.” (2001). For Beck’s letter, see LPB, Inv. No. 65: Letter from Mathias Beck to the WIC Government in Recife, September 20, 1649, quoted in Krommen, \textit{Mathias Beck und die Westindische Kompagnie}, 65.} 

March 4, 1650 (Nhanduí report). Nhanduí was not happy with this recent treaty because his people were enemies of the Ceará Tapuyas.
For all his sincere interest in strengthening diplomatic ties with the Tupis and Tapuyas, Beck remained primarily interested in establishing more control over the natives and in finding ways to make them useful for the WIC. This imperialist attitude was not only determined by the instructions of the High Council to implement WIC control over Ceará, but also by his own background as a member of a colonial elite that believed in its God-given right to command groups of a lower social status. However, the Ceará Tupis successfully resisted these efforts of colonial rule through subtle forms of non-violent resistance. Because the colonizers in Ceará were few and dependent upon the friendship of the numerically powerful Indian population, Beck was unable to force the Ceará Indians to do what he wanted.

The uneasy relationship between Beck and the Tupi leaders was reflected by the ambiguous participation of the Indians in the exploitation of the supposed silver mine in the Ceará interior. While he was initially hopeful about the willingness of local Tupi leaders like Joaõ Amunijupitanga and Francisco Aragiba to provide intelligence and manpower to the WIC mining expedition, Beck soon realized that the native headmen were more interested in gaining influence with and trade goods from the WIC expedition than in actually finding and exploiting the elusive silver mine. After Beck was told by one of his officers that Amunijupitanga and his men had not found the mine despite their claim to know its whereabouts, Beck angrily confronted the Tupi leader about his failure to live up to his promise to locate the silver mine and warned him that he would tell the WIC government in Recife of the headman’s unfulfilled promise. Amunijupitanga, concerned to maintain good standing with the Company authorities in Recife who bestowed gifts, urged Beck to write his superiors about his good intentions.
Amunijupitanga explained to Beck that it was only because of floods caused by “the great rainfalls” in the mountains that he and his men were unable to find the mine. Beck, doubtful about the excuse, refrained from seeking the services of the nearby Tupi Indians in the search for silver.354

Another example of Beck’s attempt to implement colonial control over the Ceará Tupis was his census of the Tupi population in the summer of 1649. The census reflected the Company’s eagerness to obtain as much information as possible about the Indians in order to make better use of them. By transforming their autonomous Tupi allies into numbers divided by sex, age, and military manpower, the WIC also imagined a control over the natives that they lacked in reality. Beck was only able to obtain the information from the Tupi leaders by offering all “the principal heads each a good cloth” from the WIC. When Beck submitted census-lists to his superiors in Recife in September 1649, he revealed his condescending attitude toward the Tupis by asking the High Council to send “to four or five of the principals something nice, and to the rest of the commoners nothing else than Osnabruck linen.”355

Like Beck, dominee Kemp also attempted to establish control over the Ceará Indians through colonial policies. By way of a missionary program of education and conversion, Kemp attempted to incorporate the Tupis as Christian subjects. However, the

354 LPB, Inv. No. 65: Journal of Mathias Beck from Ceará, March 20-April 10, 1649: entries of April 14 (Francisco Aragiba), April 14 (Amunijupitanga), April 21 (Beck angry at Amunijupitanga). It could be that Tupi Indians continued to be used in continuing mining expeditions, but this is difficult to prove in the face of an absence of documentary records. In the surviving WIC correspondence there is no reference to Tupi leaders providing substantial support to Beck in finding the mine after April 1649.

Ceará Tupis only adopted those aspects of Kemp’s evangelization program that they found useful. After the main council between Beck and the Tupi headmen had ended on April 10 1649, the Tupi leaders promised Beck that “they would pick up Dominee Kempius within two or three days and that they would build an appropriate residence for him in their aldeia.” However, on April 13, Beck reported in his diary that dominee Kemp accompanied a departing mining exploration party into the interior to reach the aldeias himself, “because the Brazilians have up to now not lived up to their promise to pick him up.” Although this incident did not bode well for the missionary program, Kemp eventually reached the Tupi villages and started his religious work among the natives.356

The only extant reference to Kemp’s missionary work comes from a notice in Beck’s diary on July 26, 1649. On that day, Beck received a “small letter” from Kemp informing him of the progress of the missionary program. Kemp had officiated at many weddings, and he had baptized many children in the aldeia. At the same time, Kemp noted “few if any of the people go to the church on Sunday.” Faced with the Tupi unwillingness to attend Calvinist church services, Kemp asked Beck for permission to travel to the aldeia of Francisco Aragiba, in which many couples had not yet been married, and in which some children had not yet been baptized according to the rituals of the Dutch Reformed Church. It appears that Kemp had essentially given up his main duties as a Calvinist preacher in the face of Tupi unwillingness to attend Sunday services. Instead of instructing the Ceará Tupis in the “true Protestant religion” by interpreting scripture at Sunday meeting, Kemp knowingly limited his missionary work to performing wedding and baptism ceremonies among the Indians. Interestingly, these rituals closely

356 LPB, Inv. No. 65: Journal of Mathias Beck from Ceará: entries of April 10 (promise to pick up Kemp), April 13 (failure to pick him up).
resembled the Catholic ceremonies that the Ceará Tupis had learned from Jesuit missionaries who had worked among them in the early seventeenth century. Ironically, while the Ceará Tupis welcomed Kemp to perform Christian wedding and baptism rituals, they were uninterested in adopting Calvinist ideology and theology.357

Faced with such Tupi resistance, Mathias Beck and dominee Kemp grew increasingly irritated at the local native peoples. Perhaps the strongest evidence for this attitude lay in their unequivocal rejection of intimate relations between WIC soldiers and Tupi women in Ceará. Because the WIC colonial project in Ceará consisted of soldiers and African slaves who were almost all young males, the Company soldiers soon established intimate relations with Tupi women from nearby aldeias. These indigenous women not only served as sexual partners but, most likely, also allowed soldiers that had served their contract for the WIC to establish households and families. Although there are no sources documenting the motivations of Indian women to enter into relations with the WIC soldiers, from similar situations elsewhere in colonial America it is probable that they were attracted to these young European men because the latter provided them with access to valuable trade goods such as cloths and iron tools. In addition, it is possible that intertribal warfare and epidemic diseases had resulted in a shortage of native men in the aldeias, forcing the Indian women to seek spouses outside their communities.358


In any case, Beck and Kemp strongly opposed these intercultural unions because they threatened to undermine the hierarchical colonial order, which placed Europeans in a higher social rank than the Indians. Thus, in November, 1649, the High Council reported to the *Heeren XIX* to have recently deported to the Republic the ensign Caspar Beem for “having intermingled himself with a Brazilian woman” in Ceará. While the Recife authorities justified this deportation by referring to “the strong prohibition, that no one was allowed to mix with Brazilians [from Ceará],” for fear of provoking the anger and jealousy of Tupi men, which “caused our nation to be driven from there [Ceará]” in 1644, a disdainful attitude toward the Tups was also a significant factor in the rejection of these intercultural liaisons.359

Kemp especially revealed this negative opinion about intimate relations between WIC personnel and Tups in a letter to the High Council in March 1651. Writing about the recent request of three unnamed WIC employees or soldiers in Ceará to be “established into the state of marriage with Brazilian women,” Beck reported to “have prevented this out of fear.” Kemp argued that the intermarriages “were serving no good purpose, because the Brazilian nation was not capable of mixing with us.” In addition, Kemp pointed out that he was afraid that the WIC soldiers and employees would “keep the women as nothing less than slaves; they being mistreated, this would cause hatred between us and their nation.” Because the liaisons concerned the sanctioning of formal marriages rather than loose intimate relationships, the High Council was somewhat

359 LPB, Inv. No. 65: General Missive from the WIC Government in Recife to the *Heeren XIX*, November 29, 1649.
reluctant to support Kemp. However, the Recife officials eventually instructed Beck “to attempt with soft measures to prohibit these marriages.”

As their repudiation of intimate intercultural relations and intermarriages indicated, Beck and Kemp clearly opposed a close association between Indians and Europeans in Ceará. Although both Beck and Kemp viewed the Tupi Indians in Ceará as important allies who should be treated with diplomatic respect and be transformed into devout Christians, they also actively attempted to keep the Indians separate from Europeans. Even though they worked with the Indians on an almost daily basis, neither Beck nor Kemp hoped that natives and Europeans would live together in the frontier province of Ceará. Faced with Indians who complained about the quality and quantity of trade goods and who kept the WIC in the dark about the location of the rumored silver mine, Beck eventually concluded that the Ceará Indians could not be trusted. Similarly, dominee Kemp was only able to do missionary work among the Ceará Tupis as long as he limited his activities to the performing of marriage and baptism rites and did not hold actual religious services. As the historian James Merrell recently concluded in his discussion of intercultural negotiators between Europeans and Indians in colonial Pennsylvania, “Familiarity bred people with the skill to bring strangers together in order to share ideas and solve problems; but familiarity also bred contempt.” It is through this process of increasing contempt, due to frequent intercultural contact, that Beck and Kemp prohibited intimate relations between WIC personnel and Indian women.

360 DN, Inv. No. 75: March 24, 1651, quoted in Nederlands in Brazilië, 216. See also Krommen, Mathias Beck und die Westindische Kompagnie, 68-69.

At the same time, the evidence of intimate relations between WIC soldiers and Tupi women demonstrated that not all colonists shared the same attitude towards Indians as Beck and Kemp. While the local colonial elite consisting of Beck and Kemp repudiated cross-cultural mingling, ordinary colonists and Company personnel did not refrain from establishing close and friendly ties with Indian women. Unfortunately, the WIC sources do not contain any discussion about the attitudes toward Indians of these subaltern WIC employees. Nevertheless, the incident with the soldier who was deported for having married a Tupi reveals that there were differences in Indian attitudes between the elite and ordinary colonists.

While Beck and Kemp became increasingly disillusioned with the local natives, the Ceará Indians developed a contemptuous attitude toward the WIC community at Fort Schonenburgh. There are not many sources documenting cross-cultural interactions at the WIC outpost in Ceará from 1652 to January 1654, and the High Council in Recife noticed in late January 1653 that the Ceará Tupis had become hostile toward the WIC presence after Garstman had been recalled to Recife to aid in the military defense of the city against the Portuguese. According to the High Council, “the Brazilians there [in Ceará] had begun to see the departure of the major Garstman as a disadvantage.” The Recife authorities were especially concerned after they learned that some Tupis attempted to create an alliance with their traditional Tapuya enemies, in order to drive the Dutch from Ceará. Fearing that the Europeans would “fall into the hands of these Barbaric people,” the Council decided to evacuate the WIC Fort Schonenburgh and recall Beck to Recife. This decision also reflected by the sober realization that Beck and his men had still not found any real silver, despite four years of continuing explorations. At the same time, the
High Council hoped to maintain some influence in Ceará by taking some Tupi families to Recife as hostages and by instructing several WIC soldiers to remain among the Tupi communities as mediators. Although the Recife officials did not identify these individuals, it is likely that they were the ones who had established the intimate liaisons with Tupi women of which the dominee Kemp had complained.362

Reflecting the unrealistic expectations among the Heeren XIX of holding on to Northeastern Brazil at a time when the Portuguese were practically driving the Dutch into the Atlantic, the High Council in Recife suddenly reversed the plan to evacuate its colonial project in Ceará after having received instructions from the Heeren XIX dated August 1652, to retain Fort Schonenburgh and to allow free colonists to participate in the exploration of mines. The Council sent Mathias Beck and Garstman as well as fifty soldiers back to Ceará in February 1653 to re-occupy the recently abandoned fort. This new attempt to discover silver proved a failure. The WIC relations with the Indians in Ceará quickly deteriorated, after Tupi Indians from Rio Grande and Paraíba fled to Ceará following the surrender of Recife to the Portuguese in January 1654.363

In a long letter to the Heeren XIX, written from the English colony at Barbados, in October 1654, Beck related how several thousand Tupis had sought refuge in Ceará from the wrath of the Portuguese, whom they rightly feared would wage war against the Indians for having supported the Dutch. Beck wrote that the Tupis “were cursing and

362 LPB, Inv. No. 67: Daily Minutes of December 4, 1652 to February 3, 1653: January 24, 1652 (quote about Garstman and Barbaric people); February 2, 1652 (plan to keep WIC soldiers in Ceará and evacuate Ceará colony). Dominee Kemp died sometime before 1654, see Reformed Church, 179.

swearing at the Dutch who they had served so loyally for many years.” Because they were afraid to “fall into the hands of the Portuguese as eternal slaves,” the Tupis from Northeastern Brazil had “sent envoys to the Brazilians of Ceará to instruct them to kill the Dutch wherever they could in Ceará.” Also feeling betrayed by the WIC, the Ceará Tupis as well as the recently arrived Tupi refugees subsequently began to harass the small WIC garrison in Ceará. The situation became increasingly desperate for Beck and his men, and it was only because of the arrival of a Company ship and Portuguese soldiers sometime in the spring of 1654, that the WIC colony in Ceará was not wiped out by the angry Tupis.364

After the Dutch crew and Portuguese soldiers informed Beck of the official surrender of the WIC in Recife, the Tupis desperately apologized to Beck, hoping that he could help them prevent a restoration of Portuguese rule in Ceará. Beck no longer trusted the Tupis, and he feared that this was only part of an effort to ambush the Dutch. The Portuguese officially occupied Fort Schonenburgh on May 20, and Beck, Garstman, and the rest of the WIC garrison and personnel departed for the Caribbean on June 1. However, even after the WIC had lost Brazil, Beck continued to express his paternalistic attitude toward the Indians, by writing to his superiors that the “Brazilians were easy to persuade to support us, if a force of some power was sent to them to guide them.” Arguing that the WIC could soon return to Ceará because “the Brazilians will take their opportunity and attack and kill the Portuguese, just as they attempted to do with us,” Beck claimed that the WIC could soon establish control again over Brazil. At the same time, Beck did not see any permanent role for the treacherous Indians in a Brazil ruled by

364 LPB, Inv. No. 67: Letter from Mathias Beck in Barbados to the Heeren XIX, October 8, 1654.
the WIC. Instead, Beck argued that “not only the Portuguese but also the Brazilians that are under their rule now,” would soon have to realize that with the help of the States-General the mighty WIC would eventually retain control again over Brazil. In order to avoid Dutch dependency on Portuguese sugar planters, Beck advised the *Heeren XIX* to populate the colony “not with the Portuguese but with our own people and those of neighboring nations,” meaning Protestant Europeans. Throughout Beck’s ambitious proposals for the development of the Brazilian colony, native peoples were notably absent. While he had closely lived among Indians in Ceará for five years, Beck concluded that Brazil was only going to be successful without them.\(^{365}\)

6. Conclusion

This chapter provides a social and cultural analysis of the European intercultural diplomats among the Indian peoples in colonial northeastern Brazil during the period of WIC rule from 1635 to 1654. There were five different types of mediators in Dutch Brazil: the Commanders of Brazilians, the *aldeia* captains stationed at the Tupi mission villages, Protestant Christian missionary personnel, go-betweens among the Tarairius, and finally the negotiators employed by the WIC in the frontier provinces of Ceará and Maranhão.

Because of their direct access to the High Council in Recife, the most influential category of negotiators in Dutch Brazil was that of the Commanders of Brazilians. This

\(^{365}\) LPB, Inv. No. 67: Letter from Mathias Beck in Barbados to the *Heeren XIX*, October 8, 1654. In the letter Beck also noted that Garstman had died sometime in the spring of 1654 after having set sail from Ceará for the Caribbean. For Beck’s letter see also Krommen, *Mathias Beck und die Westindische Kompagnie*, 70-73. In June 1655 Director Peter Stuyvesant of New Netherland who was in Barbados at that time appointed Beck as vice-Director of the WIC colony of Curacao. See Krommen, 72-73.
post can best be described as that of superintendent of Indian affairs. For the Commanders of Brazilians, the Indians were peoples who had to be brought under control and made useful to the Company. This emphasis on control was reflected in the fact that most Commanders of Brazilians simultaneously acted as local law-enforcement officers in the colonial community. In addition, many Commanders of Brazilians considered their post to be but a temporary position that enabled them to obtain a considerable salary and some social status as they worked their way up in the hierarchical colonial order. Johannes Listry was an important exception to this pattern. Although he was also concerned with status and accumulating wealth in colonial society, during his fourteen-year long career as Commander of Brazilians from 1639 to January 1654, Listry remained a committed supervisor of the WIC policy toward the Brazilian Indians. He generally treated the natives with respect and consideration.

Unlike Listry, the *aldeia* captains were more concerned with improving their own status than with maintaining good relations with the Tupi Indians. Because of their poverty and low social status, many soldiers who were appointed as *aldeia* captains exploited their position to gain economic wealth by hiring the Indians out as cheap laborers to sugar mill owners. Although the High Council attempted to reform the system by selecting married Dutchmen as opposed to young single men from other European countries, the *aldeia* captains continued to be recruited from the lowest and poorest ranks of colonial society. These men continued to abuse their influence as overseers to improve their own social-economic position. It was therefore not surprising that the High Council eventually decided to abolish the system of European *aldeia* captains altogether and grant indirect rule to the Tupis themselves in the spring of 1645.
The third category of intercultural diplomats was that of the Dutch Calvinist missionary personnel. Even though they were not officially employed as traditional diplomats by the High Council, their linguistic expertise in the Tupi language and their willingness to work among Indians made them well-suited to function as liaisons between the WIC and the natives. However, most of the ministers, lay-preachers, and schoolteachers soon concluded that the Tupis were not willing to adopt Protestant Christianity. Because most Indians continued to practice both their traditional religious rituals and the Catholic ceremonies that they had previously learned from Portuguese Jesuits, many Calvinist missionaries became disillusioned with the program to transform the Tupis into sedentary Christian farmers. By the time of the outbreak of the Portuguese rebellion against the WIC in the summer of 1645, most Calvinist officials had already abandoned the missionary program among the Tupis. At the same time, several individual ministers and lay-preachers stayed in Brazil to work among the Indians, even though they realized that the Tupi interest in Calvinism did not go deep. By distributing material aid to the impoverished Indian allies during the late 1640s, the Dutch Reformed Church in the Republic, as well as the remaining Protestant missionaries in Brazil, displayed a remarkable humanitarian interest in the “Brazilians”.

A special group of negotiators were those that were instructed by the High Council to function as liaison-officers between the WIC and the Tarairius of the province of Rio Grande. Since the Tarairius were viewed by the Company officials and colonists as dangerous and uncontrollable “savages” who should be kept outside the boundaries of colonial society, the European negotiators who served among these natives had to make clear to colonial society that they were not closely associated with the Tarairius. As the
violent death of Jacob Rabe indicated, those go-betweens who were seen as having
crossed the cultural boundary between the colonists and the Tarairius were viewed as
dangerous to the colonial order. By performing their roles as negotiators among the
Tarairius with detachment and reluctance, Rabe’s successors, Roelof Baro and Pieter
Persijn clearly showed that their main interests were with colonial society and not with
the “wild” Tarairius.

Finally, the intercultural diplomats who were employed by the WIC in the frontier
provinces of Ceará and Maranhão also revealed that their loyalties were solely with
colonial society rather than with the native peoples they dealt with on a frequent basis. In
fact, Gideon Morris de Jonge, the Commander of Brazilians in Ceará and Maranhão,
actually helped bring about a deadly war against the WIC community in this frontier
region by aggressively forcing Indians to work in the colonial economy. Although
Mathias Beck pursued somewhat successful diplomatic relations with the Ceará Indians
after the WIC returned to this province in 1649, his experience with the local Tupi leaders
and people led him to conclude that the natives could not be trusted. His status as a
member of the colonial elite led him to view the natives as people who should be kept
under imperial control. Similarly, dominee Kemp, who assisted Beck in facilitating
intercultural diplomacy in Ceará, concluded that the Tupi Indians should not mingle
intimately with Europeans. After having done extensive missionary work among the
Tupis for more than a decade, Kemp realized that the Tupis were only willing to adopt
certain aspects of Protestant Christian civilization. Despite this Indian resistance, Kemp
continued to baptize Indian children and to officiate at native weddings in Ceará until his
death sometime before 1654. While he repudiated a close association between Europeans
and the seemingly stubborn Indians, Kemp simultaneously remained committed to bringing the natives closer to the “true Christian religion.”

When reviewing the attitudes of these five categories of European intercultural diplomats toward Indians, it is clear that most mediators kept the Indians at arm’s length. For all their work as people who were in close contact with Indians, most European intercultural diplomats looked down upon the Indians and did not want to associate too closely with them.

At the same time, there were considerable exceptions to this pattern. A small number of Protestant missionaries continued to work among Indians, even after it was clear to them that the natives did not fully embrace Dutch Calvinism. This was especially the case after the outbreak of the Portuguese revolt against Dutch rule in 1645 brought real hardship to the Indian allies of the WIC. In addition, some WIC personnel established intimate relations or formal marriages with Indian women. Individuals such as Jacob Rabe and several WIC soldiers in Ceará demonstrated that Dutch colonists were not averse to forging close and intimate ties with Indian women. Finally, the prominent go-between Johannes Listry displayed a considerable amount of sympathy for the Indians. Although Listry’s concern for native peoples was partially determined by paternalism and by a pragmatic determination to keep the Indians as useful allies of the WIC, his long career as influential Commander of Brazilians showed that some intercultural diplomats in Dutch Brazil genuinely attempted to bring Indians and Europeans together. The attitudes of European mediators toward Brazilian Indians should therefore not be construed as uniformly negative.
CHAPTER 5

“WE BEHAVE OURSELVES AS FRIENDS, BUT THEY SHOW THEMSELVES AS SCOUNDRELS”: EVERYDAY CONTACTS AND THE LIMITS OF THE FRONTIER EXCHANGE ECONOMY IN NEW NETHERLAND, 1635-1664

As we have seen in the previous two chapters, Dutch-Indian relations in colonial Brazil were largely shaped by political and military considerations. Because the mutual need to form an anti-Portuguese alliance was the primary reason that both cultures were brought together, the Dutch and Brazilian Indians relied on a relatively small group of experienced intercultural mediators to maintain the diplomatic relationship. Except for the political and military alliance, the Brazilian natives and the Dutch did not establish close ties in other aspects of daily life. Most Dutch colonists either lived in coastal towns such as Recife or resided on sugar plantations primarily worked by African slaves, not Native Americans. Although Dutch Reformed ministers struggled to convert Brazilian

366 For the quotation, see New York State Archives (NYSA), Albany, New York Colonial Manuscripts (NYCM) (Dutch): Correspondence, Volume 13: 13-53 B. (letter from Ensign Smitt to Johannes La Montagne, November, 13, 1659) (for a slightly different English translation, see DRCHSNY, 13: 127).
Indians, the number of Calvinist missionaries always remained small and the actual missionary activities took place in native communities outside of colonial society.

Compared to Brazil, New Netherland saw many colonists and Indians in frequent contact. In the mid-Atlantic region of North America, the relationship between the Dutch and Indians was largely shaped by the development of an extensive frontier exchange economy. In this intercultural bartering system, Indians and Dutch colonists exchanged a large variety of goods and services. While the Algonquians and Iroquoians supplied the Dutch with animal skins, foodstuffs, and *sewant* (*wampum*), the colonists provided their Indian neighbors with a variety of manufactured goods such as clothes, textiles, iron tools, firearms and gunpowder, pastries, and liquor. In addition, a considerable number of natives were employed in the colonial economy as field-workers or couriers. This frontier exchange economy determined Indian-Dutch relations throughout the period of Dutch colonial rule in mid-Atlantic North America. Even after the English conquest of New Netherland in 1664, the frontier exchange economy continued to shape intercultural relations in this region.367

The bartering system between Indians and Europeans in New Netherland remained essentially unchanged throughout the period of Dutch colonial rule, because New Netherland always remained a marginal part of the Dutch Atlantic empire. The West India Company spent far more resources in the conquest of the sugar regions of Brazil. In

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addition, to supply the labor for the sugar mills and plantations in Brazil, the Company devoted much energy toward gaining direct access to the West African slave trading ports. By the time the Dutch lost Brazil and most of their African slave stations to the Portuguese in the early 1650s, the WIC was bankrupt. Although the colonial economy of New Netherland considerably diversified through the development of agriculture and tobacco farms, beaver furs remained its most profitable export. Due to the shortage of specie, beaver furs as well as wampum were used among colonists to facilitate daily transactions.368

New Netherland’s frontier exchange economy also remained important because the colonial population never fully supplanted Native Americans. Even though a considerable number of Dutch, English, and other European immigrants settled in New Netherland during the 1650s and 1660s, the extensive mid-Atlantic region that stretched from the Delaware River Valley to the Upper Hudson Valley remained sparsely populated compared to Virginia and Puritan New England. By the time of the English conquest in 1664, New Netherland reportedly had no more than 8,000 inhabitants of European descent, compared to approximately 40,000 in Virginia in the 1670s and about 100,000 in Puritan New England by 1700. Moreover, of the 8,000 colonists in New Netherland, many were English-born settlers from New England who had moved into eastern Long Island during the 1640s and 1650s. The Dutch-dominated colonial

368 On the colonial economy and the fur trade in New Netherland, see Zegenrijk Gewest, chapter 4. For the use of wampum and furs as currencies, see Zegenrijk Gewest, 175-180.
population of New Netherland was limited to Manhattan, western Long Island, and the cluster of towns and scattered farmsteads in the Upper Hudson Valley.\textsuperscript{369}

Outside these colonial communities, the Algonquians and Iroquoian peoples still had considerable control over their lands. While the native peoples of the mid-Atlantic region suffered terribly from epidemic diseases, such as smallpox, that were inadvertently transmitted to them by Europeans and neighboring Indian groups with whom they traded, the Indian populations remained sizable enough to continue to live as independent political entities throughout the region during the era of Dutch colonial rule. For instance, anthropologists Dean R. Snow and William A. Starna have estimated that the Mohawk Iroquois declined in population due to diseases from 7,740 in the period 1626-1635 to approximately 2,835 people in the period 1635-1650. While this was a staggering decline in population that had dramatic repercussions for native families and communities, the Mohawks still outnumbered the nearby Dutch communities of Schenectady and Beverwijck by the mid-1660s.\textsuperscript{370}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{370} For the Mohawk depopulation, see Snow, Starna, and Charles T. Gehring, eds. \textit{In Mohawk Country: Early Narratives of a Native People} (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996), table on xxii. See also José Antônio Brandão, \textit{“Your Fyre Shall Burn No More”: Iroquois Policy toward New France and Its Native Allies to 1701} (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press,
Because the Dutch invaders did not fully crowd out the native peoples and because of the continuing importance of beaver furs and wampum as items of intercultural exchange, the frontier exchange economy continued to shape Dutch-Indian relations in New Netherland, putting Native Americans and Dutch colonists in frequent contact. Many colonists quickly learned some of the Indian jargons and became familiar with native peoples. At the same time, many Algonquian and Iroquoian men and women made use of some Dutch phrases and customs to obtain manufactured goods as well as liquor and firearms. In contrast to colonial Brazil, where a relatively small group of interpreters and go-betweens managed intercultural relations, New Netherland’s frontier exchange economy encouraged many colonists and Indians to communicate with each other.

Some historians have recently argued that while studies about official intercultural mediators provide an interesting window into Indian-European relations in Early America, we also need to focus on those individuals who often crossed cultural boundaries but were not serving either colonial officials or native leaders. In his analysis of colonial negotiators on the eighteenth century Indian-European contact zone in Pennsylvania, historian Alan Taylor correctly noted, “much of what the Indians and the colonists knew about one another (or thought they knew) derived from more routine encounters at taverns, stores, and woodpaths” rather than from official treaties and special meetings between Indian spokesmen and colonial authorities. In addition, by only concentrating on the official mediators, historians risk the danger of giving too much prominence to the selected group of individuals who served as official liaisons between

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1997), appendices B and C. For Beverwijck population estimates in 1664 see Zegenrijk Gewest, 253.
Native Americans and colonial officials. We therefore gain a more comprehensive picture of Indian-European relations in Early America by including the numerous colonists and Indians who interacted with each other on a personal level rather than an official one.371

This chapter examines the many everyday interactions between Indians and colonists in New Netherland. The frontier exchange economy did not only bring specialized colonial and Indian frontiersmen together but also townsmen, farmers, soldiers, company officials, and Native American villagers and hunters. Indian and Dutch women actively participated in the cross-cultural bartering system; in the process, Indian women and Dutch men also established extensive liaisons and intimate relations with each other. Moreover, the close intercultural interactions also allowed for frank discussions about issues that were deemed important by both colonists and Indians, such as religion.

However, the cross-cultural bartering system that brought the two radically different cultures closer together did not lead to the creation of a stable relationship. For both colonists and Indians, the cultural differences that separated them were too great. Although the Dutch and natives were able to work together, establish friendly contacts, and even enter into intimate liaisons, the relationship remained primarily practical and self-centered. Each side knew what it wanted from the other but at the same time was not interested in establishing a close intercultural relationship. Instead, the frontier exchange

economy was often marred by abusive behavior, violent incidents, and a general tendency among both Indians and colonists to maintain a cultural distance.372

1. The Frontier Exchange Economy of New Netherland

Although the bartering of beaver furs for manufactured goods dominated the frontier exchange economy, Indians and Dutch colonists exchanged many other goods and services. Since the lack of capital, labor, and fertile soils slowed the rise of a self-supporting colonial agriculture sector in New Netherland until the 1650s, many colonists turned to their native neighbors to obtain food resources. The trade in foodstuffs with the natives was especially important during the 1620s and 1630s for the Dutch colonists who lived on and around Manhattan where rocky terrain and a shortage of farmers made it difficult to live off the land. Although colonial agricultural productivity in New Netherland increased after the Algonquian-Dutch wars of the early 1640s, local Indians supplied the inhabitants of New Amsterdam with Indian corn, fish, and venison into the 1660s. In addition, Dutch colonists also adopted Indian dishes into their own diet such as sappaen, a cornmeal mush. Sappaen remained a popular dish among Dutch-speaking colonists in New York throughout the eighteenth century.373


While the Dutch adopted Indian foods, their native neighbors were soon attracted to the colonists’ sweet pastries and breads. In November 1649, director-general Petrus Stuyvesant and the Colonial Council officially condemned colonial bakers for selling white bread to the natives because “the Indians and barbarous natives are furnished the best [white breads] in preference to the Christian nation from a desire and inclination for the highest profit.” The court minutes of Fort Orange and Beverwijck also contain several references to the selling of pastries, white breads, and other pastries to Native Americans. In March 1654, a group of Beverwijck residents petitioned the Fort Orange court to take action against local bakers for selling their sweet products to the Indians. Dutch officials attempted to curtail the sale of these items because they feared that the bakers spent their limited supplies of white flour, sugar, and raisons on Indian customers rather than on baking bread for the colonists. Since these ordinances were issued repeatedly during the 1650s, it is clear that the bakers continued to sell their sweet products to Indian customers illegally.374

Alcoholic beverages and liquor proved to be even more controversial. Beer, wine, and brandy were completely new drinks for the Native American peoples of mid-Atlantic North America, and their unfamiliarity with liquor often resulted in binge drinking and drunkeness. Since colonial authorities feared that the heavy consumption of alcohol by natives would result in intercultural violence between drunken Indians and colonists, they

374 The trade in sweet breads to Indians at Beverwijck has been noted by many scholars. For a good overview from the colonial perspective, see Zegenrijk Gewest, 214-218. See also Rose, The Sensible Cook, 26-27. For the frequent references to these transactions, see Charles T. Gehring, ed. and trans. New Netherland Documents Series Volume XVI, part one: Laws and Writs of Appeal, 1647-1663 (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991), 22-23 (1649 condemnation of bakers by Colonial Council); Gehring, ed. and trans. New Netherland Documents Series, Volume XVI, part two: Fort Orange Court Minutes, 1652-1660 (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 43-44, 46, 109-110 (March 1654 petition).
attempted with ordinances and fines to prohibit the sale of liquor to Indians in New Netherland. But Native Americans continued to imbibe, and tavern keepers as well as ordinary colonists continued to barter liquor to them for beaver furs and wampum. Alcoholic beverages were especially attractive products to exchange with Indians because they were widely available and cheap to obtain. Beer and wine constituted the most common drinks throughout the colony, since normal drinking water in Dutch towns was usually contaminated by sewage from the streets.375

Despite the significance of the trade in corn, venison, and fish, colonists sought animal hides above all other items. Beaver skins were not only lucrative export products that fetched a good price at the European markets; they formed a colonial currency. The WIC originally attempted to maintain a monopoly in the fur trade, but ongoing illicit trade and pressure from the States-General in the Republic to stimulate migration to the colony forced the *Heeren XIX* to open the trade for every colonist in 1640. After the depletion of fur bearing animals around Manhattan in the late 1630s, the fur trade of New Netherland was primarily concentrated at Rensselaerswijck, Fort Orange, and the town of Beverwijck (now Albany), which was incorporated in 1652. The Mohawks and to a much lesser extent the Mahicans, who both lived in the vicinity of Beverwijck, supplied their

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Dutch neighbors with increasing amounts of animal skins during the 1640s and 1650s. During the late 1650s the stream of furs occasionally slowed down because of intertribal wars and the depletion of beaver populations in western New York State.376

In return for the animal skins and foodstuffs, the colonists provided the visiting Indians with a variety of trade goods, especially clothes, cloths, and iron and metal tools. Although professional merchants had a logistical advantage by supplying these items in large quantities to the Indians, farmers and townsmen throughout New Netherland were often able to provide worn shirts, surplus nails, and old kettles to the natives as well. The Indians quickly proved themselves selective customers. Already in 1626, Isaack de Rasière, the Secretary of the colonial government at that time, noted that he could only sell dark-colored duffels to the Indians. De Rasière complained that “the rest of which I have are all red, whereof I can hardly sell a yard, because the wilden say that it hinders them in hunting, being visible too far off.” To his disappointment, the Indians “all call for black, the darker the color the better, but red and green they will not take.”377

Both Indians and Europeans also exchanged white and purple shell-beads in New Netherland. Before the arrival of Europeans, Native Americans throughout Eastern North


America used these shell-beads in kinship-rituals and as the primary material in a mnemonic device documenting important events. Soon after they came in contact with the native peoples, French, Dutch, and English colonists quickly adopted the usage of the shell-beads as a colonial currency, because they lacked a sufficient supply of silver or gold coins to facilitate daily transactions. The Dutch referred to the beads as *sewant* after a Narragansett Algonquian word for unstrung beads. When the Puritans adopted the shells in New England they used the term *wampum*, which was another Algonquian word for white shell beads. The French in Canada borrowed the Italian term *porcelaine* (white ceramics) to denote the shell-beads. Because both Indians and Europeans came to value the shell-beads, a brisk intercultural trade in them developed in mid-Atlantic North America during the early seventeenth century. The Dutch quickly realized that they could use the beads to obtain beaver furs from Indians who did not have much access to the shell-beads. Since most white and purple shells were found on Long Island, the Dutch developed a complex trade system in which they first procured wampum from Long Island Algonquians in return for manufactured goods. After this transaction the Dutch shipped the beads to Fort Orange or the Delaware River Valley, where they were used to obtain beaver furs from respectively the Iroquois or the Susquehannocks.  

The most controversial products bartered by colonists to the Indians in New Netherland were firearms, gunpowder, and lead. The company government not only

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feared that the colonists would arm potential Indian enemies but also that the trade would anger England and France by endangering their North American colonies. Authorities in both New England and New France frequently complained to the Colonial Council in Manhattan about the Dutch-Indian trade in guns and ammunition. While French and English colonists also illegally supplied their Indian neighbors with firearms, they accused the Dutch colonists of providing the Algonquians and the Iroquoians with the most guns and ammunition. Since most of this trade was illicit and undocumented, it is difficult to verify these accusations. However, during the seventeenth century the Dutch were known throughout Europe for their prominent arms industry and trade in military hardware.379

It does appear that Dutch colonists as well as junior colonial officials were more than willing to sell guns and ammunition to their Indian neighbors in return for valuable beaver furs. Like the frequent ordinances against the sale of bread and liquor to the wilden, the official prohibitions against the sale of guns, powder, and lead to the Indians had to be issued repeatedly, which indicates that the illegal trade probably persisted. The available documentary records of New Netherland contain several instances of colonists accused of having sold arms to the Indians. Finally, WIC officials were unable to prevent

the Algonquians and the Iroquoians from demanding firearms. Despite their complicated mechanisms and inaccuracy at great distances, firearms gave Native Americans a strategic military advantage over Indian enemies who were lacking guns because the arms killed more effectively at short range than arrows or spears. The Mohawks and other Iroquois groups were particularly interested in obtaining Dutch guns because of their ongoing wars with the Hurons and other Indian enemies in the Saint Lawrence Valley and Great Lakes regions during the second half of the seventeenth century. Because the demands for firearms continued unabated, and since the WIC was concerned that the Indians would turn against them or obtain weapons from the English or French, the Company government eventually allowed local authorities in New Netherland to supply the wilden with some weapons and other military goods. However, WIC officials continued to discourage private colonists from participating in the gun trade to avoid problems with the English and French.380

Another prized but controversial “commodity” in the frontier exchange economy of New Netherland was land. Although some scholars have portrayed the Dutch as primarily more interested in trade than settlement, many documents demonstrate that colonists frequently bought land from their native neighbors. The company had developed strict rules for the formal transfer of land from Indians to colonists since the early 1620s for three reasons. First, by obtaining official land-deeds in writing with signatures from the participating Indians, WIC authorities hoped to strengthen their legal status as a colonial power in North America. Secondly, by forcing colonists to adequately compensate the Indians for their ceded lands, the company attempted to avoid any native

380 Zegenrijk Gewest, 189-190; Trelease, Indian Affairs in Colonial New York, 94-102.
complaints that the transaction was fraudulent. A third and final reason was to clarify title among potentially competing colonists. In order to make sure that Indians were sufficiently paid for their lands by individual colonists, company authorities required all participating parties to sign the official deed before colonial officials or notaries public.\textsuperscript{381}

Native Americans in New Netherland were generally not opposed to selling small parts of their lands to Dutch colonists. Because the number of Europeans remained relatively small in the mid-Atlantic region throughout the period of Dutch rule, native peoples were not rapidly forced from their lands as were those in southern New England, where waves of Puritan immigrants quickly displaced local Indians. In addition, some pieces of land that the Indians sold to the Dutch had been vacated due to intertribal wars. For example, the Mahicans willingly sold lands on the Westside of the Upper Hudson Valley to agents of Kiliaen van Rensselaer in 1630 because they had lost this region to the Mohawks during the late 1620s. Moreover, as long as Dutch colonial authorities compensated them with valuable trade goods, native peoples were willing to cede small portions of their lands to the Europeans. Because the Dutch were concerned to compensate the Indians adequately, those natives involved in land-sales often obtained valuable commodities such as firearms, gunpowder, and textiles. Indian peoples who did not have much else to offer to the Dutch beside lands often followed this last motivation. For example, the Mahicans, who had been largely shut out from the beaver trade by the

\textsuperscript{381} For the Dutch concerns to make official treaties with Indians regarding the buying of land, see Patricia Seed, \textit{Ceremonies of Possession in Europe’s Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), chapter 5. There is a good photocopy of a land-sale by Indians to Dutch colonists made before a notary public in April 1665 in Merwick, \textit{Possessing Albany}, 287-288.
Mohawks, increasingly sold small portions of their lands to Dutch colonists during the 1650s and 1660s.\textsuperscript{382}

Finally, for native peoples, the transfer of lands did not mean the transfer of actual ownership rights. As many scholars have pointed out, the European concept of permanent private ownership of land was alien to Native Americans of Northeastern North America. When Indian communities or individuals transferred lands to colonists, they understood these transactions to mean that the colonists only obtained the right to share the use of the lands with the natives. Because of this different attitude toward land ownership, many Indians continued to fish, hunt, or grow corn on the lands that they had “sold” to the Dutch. From the Dutch perspective, these recurring Indian visits were seen as trespassing. To avoid possible incidents, colonial officials demanded that Indians who participated in land-deeds formally acknowledged that they permanently surrendered all their rights to lands that they intended to sell. However, since the natives continued to adhere to traditional notions of land-use, Dutch authorities were often forced to negotiate new deeds with Indians for lands that had already been sold.\textsuperscript{383}


A final form of interaction in the frontier exchange economy was the Dutch use of Indians as temporary workers. Because there was often a shortage of field hands and servants, colonial farmers and townsmen relied on native men and women. By hiring themselves out as temporary workers to colonists, Native Americans were able to obtain valuable manufactured goods and liquor. An ordinance of September 1648 urging colonists to compensate the Indians adequately for their services indicated that the Dutch often hired natives as laborers. For instance, to help him with the harvest of his cornfields outside the town of Esopus in 1659, the English colonist Thomas Chambers hired a group of local “Esopus” Indian men. Originally “there had been nine of them, but one went away and they were at work until towards evening.” In return for their services the Indians received “a large bottle with brandy” from Chambers.\(^{384}\)

Although the Dutch communities largely relied on the natural waterways of the mid-Atlantic region to remain in contact with one another, many rivers and creeks froze during the wintertime, which made travel difficult. Company authorities particularly relied on Native American messengers to maintain communication between the strategic Fort Orange and New Amsterdam in the winter. Like other Indians in North America, the Algonquian- and Iroquoian-speaking peoples of mid-Atlantic North America made regular use of paths for travel, trade, war, and diplomacy. Since colonists were mostly unfamiliar with these Indian trails, Dutch officials hired natives who had a good knowledge of the network of paths that connected the coast with the hinterland. Company officials already made use of Indian postmen since the mid-1620s. A missive from the Fort Orange court magistrates to the Company government at Fort Amsterdam in January

1662 contained the short message that “According to custom these two wilden are dispatched to keep up the communication between the two places in wintertime.” Individual colonists also used Indian couriers to carry important messages back and forth. This practice continued after the English conquest of New Netherland. In December 1680, the previously mentioned Thomas Chambers rewarded an Indian man with a duffel cloth for having carried a personal letter. As these examples demonstrate, colonists and Indians closely interacted with each other in many ways because of material demands and economic needs.385

2. Places of Interaction

Before the opening of the fur trade to all colonists in 1639, WIC traders visited native communities by using one of the many waterways in the mid-Atlantic region. Native Americans also traveled to the scattered Dutch trading posts and colonial communities located on various places along the Zuidrivier (South or Delaware River), the Noordrivier (North or Hudson River), and the Verserivier (Fresh or Connecticut River). During the period of Company monopoly (1621-1639), many colonists clandestinely exchanged manufactured goods for valuable beaver furs, wampum, or foodstuffs with the Indians as well. After the fur trade was opened to all colonists, authorities feared that colonists would cause problems with Indians and provoke

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385 For the use of Indian postmen in the mid-1620s, see “Letter of Isaack de Rasieres to Samuel Blommaert, 1628 (?),” NNN, 104. For the use of runners in 1662, see New York State Archives, Albany, New York Colonial Manuscripts (Dutch), Volume 14: Correspondence, 1661-1662: 42 (quotation). See also DRCHSNY 13: 215. For Chambers, see Zegenrijk Gewest, 326. For Indian paths and travel, see Merrell, Into the American Woods, chapter 3. See also Neal Salisbury, “The Indians’ Old World: Native Americans and the Coming of Europeans,” WMQ LIII, no. 3 (1996): 435-458.
intercultural conflicts. The WIC government and local magistrates hoped to control these interactions by encouraging Indians and colonists to meet each other only in colonial communities. Many, but not all, intercultural encounters after 1640 therefore took place in colonial towns. At the same time, professional traders and individual colonists continued to travel to native villages, riverbanks, and woods to meet with Indians. However, the available documentary sources almost never refer to these illicit encounters because the colonial authorities lacked an adequate police apparatus to inspect them.386

One of the main components of the company policy to control interethnic relations was the *handelstijd*, or trading season. Although it was modeled after existing directives in the United Provinces, the *handelstijd* in New Netherland was tightly circumscribed to order commerce with Native Americans. Dutch officials allowed the Indians to bring their furs and other goods to Dutch communities only during *handelstijd*. Colonists were prohibited from selling liquor and firearms to the Indians for fear of igniting intercultural conflicts. In addition, bakers were repeatedly prohibited from selling white breads and pastries to Indians for fear of not being able to supply the colonists with adequate amounts of breads. The trading season usually lasted from June to August, but it could sometimes start earlier or end later. Because the Mohawks were the most valuable suppliers of beaver furs in New Netherland, the nearby Dutch communities of Fort Orange and Beverwijck became important centers of cross-cultural trade during *handelstijd*. Each summer, Beverwijck’s population swelled with visiting Dutch traders and colonists from elsewhere in the colony. Because of the profitability of the beaver furs

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as an export good and local currency, almost everybody in Beverwijck tried to obtain beaver pelts from the visiting Indians. According to recent interpretations of the handelstijd season in Beverwijck, “the people involved [in the trade] ranged from the poorest of families with a bit of duffel or perhaps an iron kettle to trade for a beaver or two to the domine’s wife who traded to augment their income.”

Because the nearest Mohawk villages were several days’ traveling away, a considerable number of natives stayed overnight in Beverwijck and often slept in colonists’ houses or in specially constructed huts built by the colonists. Johannes Megapolensis, a Dutch Reformed minister who was stationed at the patroonship of Rensselaerswijck during the 1640s, described how Mohawks regularly lodged at his bedroom. Megapolensis noted “they sleep by us, too, in our chambers before our beds. I have had eight at once lying and sleeping on the floor near my bed, for it is their custom to sleep simply on the bare ground.” These seasonal Indian visits continued even after the English took over New Netherland in 1664 and renamed Beverwijck “Albany”. For example, in June 1670 two native men named “Mamanichtack” and “Teffenichki” and a woman named “Memechtiemach” belonging to the “Katskill” Algonquians testified to the local Dutch notary Adriaen van Ilpendam about their recent visit to the house of Jan Heijndricksz Bruijn in “New Albany”. According to the three Indians, who spoke through

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the interpreter Joris Christoffelsz, they had come to Bruijn’s residence on Sunday evening, presumably to trade. Because it was late, Bruijn told them to sleep outside the town’s palisades and to return the next day. The “Katskill” natives did this and “slept that night under some boards set up against a fence.” In the morning they entered the gate and told Bruijn’s “negro that they were hungry and wanted to cook, and as Jan Hendrickse had not yet arisen, an Indian laid himself down to sleep, and there also came a Maqua Indian and squaw with a child, which woman also laid herself down to sleep beside him.”388

While many of the encounters between the Dutch and natives took place at the well-documented Dutch communities of Beverwijck-Albany on the Upper Hudson Valley, Native Americans also visited colonial towns in other parts of New Netherland. Even after the trade in beaver skins had subsided on the Atlantic seaboard due to the depletion of fur bearing animals there by the late 1630s, Indians and colonists continued to exchange a variety of goods in and around New Amsterdam. In March 1648 Director-General Stuyvesant and the Colonial Council complained about the preponderance of liquor and tobacco stores in New Amsterdam. The company government considered the large number of these businesses not only morally corrupting for children of colonists, but also feared that the “clandestine sale of beer and brandy to the Indians and natives,”

would lead to “new animosities … between them and us.” The Council therefore issued 
an ordinance ordering that all tavernkeepers and tapsters “shall henceforth not be allowed 
to sell, barter or present to the Indians or natives any beer, wine, brandy or spirits.” In 
addition, New Amsterdam officials made plans to erect a special trading house for the 
Indians in 1661. Other documentary evidence also indicates that Native Americans 
seasonally visited New Amsterdam to barter furs, fish, corn, and wampum for 
manufactured goods with Dutch residents.389

While traveling throughout the colony, Native Americans and Dutch colonists 
also came in close contact with each other. In an official ordinance regarding the 
operations of the ferry between Manhattan and Long Island in July 1654, the company 
government at New Amsterdam ruled that each “Indian male or female” using the ferry 
was required to pay the same amount as each male or female colonist. Although we don’t 
have any other sources describing how Indians and Dutch colonists interacted on the 
ferry connecting New Amsterdam and the colonial towns on Long Island, it is clear from 
the ordinance that natives and Europeans were sharing the same small boat. As all these 
examples demonstrate, Indians and colonists closely interacted during handelstijd.

Indians and colonists frequently encountered each other in Dutch towns, private 
residences, taverns, and public market places. In addition, they even shared similar modes 
of transportation.390

and Writs of Appeal, 1647-1663 (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991), 14-16 (1648 
ordinance); Diana Dallal, “Van Tienhoven’s Basket: Treasure or Trash?” Another Man’sTrash is 
Another Man’s Treasure, 215-216 (1661 plan of New Amsterdam officials); Shaw, “Building 
New Netherland,” 263 (evidence about Indians visiting New Amsterdam).

390 Gehring, Laws and Writs of Appeal, 41-44. For other instances of Indians and 
colonists sharing the road, see Shaw, “Building New Netherland,” 146-148. Merrell, Into the
Finally, relations between the two sides were so close that Indians often adopted or were given Dutch names. Unlike the Dutch, who held on to their baptismal names through life, the native peoples of mid-Atlantic North America frequently changed their names. According to James Axtell, “The eastern tribes shared a custom of renaming in which an individual could give himself or be given a new name whenever changed circumstances, personal fortune, or mere whim warranted.” In order to strengthen trade relations with the Dutch, some Indians therefore assumed Dutch names. In September 1626, the Company secretary Isaack de Rasière mentioned that an Algonquian man had recently adopted the Dutchman’s first name. The Indian had assumed the name “Isaacq” to symbolize his valuable status as a middleman between the Dutch and the Iroquoian-speaking Susquehannocks who lived in the interior. Some Mahican individuals who were in frequent contact with the Dutch on the Upper Hudson Valley adopted the first and last name of local colonists, such as “Jan de Backer,” and “Hans Vos.” Since the Dutch had great difficulties in pronouncing the Algonquian and Iroquoian names, they often bestowed Dutch names or nicknames on Indians. Some of these names, such as “Hans the savage,” were more or less practical, while others, such as “Aepjen” (Little Ape), revealed an ambiguous attitude toward the Indians.391

Woods, chapter 3, is a perceptive discussion of travel as an important component of intercultural relations.

391 James Axtell, The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 168 (quote). Wieder, De Stichting van New York in 1625, 170 (De Rasière). For an English translation, see Van Laer, Documents Relating to New Netherland, Document F. Dunn, Mohicans and Their Land, 244-246 (Hans Vos, Jan de Backer, Aepjen, Kaatkat). DRCHSNY, 13: 314-317 (Hans the savage; the original Dutch document probably used the term “wilde”). The meaning of the use of ape-names for Indians had perhaps a symbolic meaning. As Benjamin Schmidt has pointed out, “In Dutch iconography, the ape stood for licentiousness and imprisonment to vice. More generally, it was a symbol of appetite and folly.” See Benjamin Schmidt, “Innocence Abroad: The Dutch Imagination and the Representation of the New World, c. 1570-1670,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1994),
3. Colonial and Indian Women in the Intercultural Relationship

Because New Netherland remained an economically underdeveloped part of the Dutch Atlantic system, all segments of the Dutch colonial population had to participate in informal exchanges to survive and prosper. During *handelstijd*, artisans, bakers, farmers, and tavernkeepers actively sought out visiting Indians to exchange manufactured goods for beaver skins, wampum, or foodstuffs. Because it was long assumed that the traditional roles of early modern European women were relegated to the domestic sphere, it was also assumed that women did not closely interact with Native American peoples. As historian Susannah Shaw has recently pointed out, “American cultural stereotyping of the frontier has long focused on the transfrontiermen, the uncouth but brave traders, both Native and White, who traveled from one community to the other.” However, the frontier exchange economy in New Netherland allowed many Dutch women to establish close relations with their Indian neighbors. Dutch colonists heavily depended upon the bartering of furs, food, clothes, and other goods with Algonquians and Iroquoian peoples to supplement their incomes. Since colonial authorities permitted Indians to bring their furs and other goods to colonial towns only during *handelstijd*, Dutch townswomen came as much in contact with natives as did their male counterparts.392

377. Perhaps the Dutch viewed Indians like Aepjen as idle individuals who coveted frivolous trade items such as beads.

Seventeenth-century Dutch women were only able to participate in the frontier exchange economy as spouses or as members of households. The Roman-Dutch legal system of the United Provinces that was transplanted to New Netherland by the WIC narrowly prescribed the roles of women in public life. According to these laws, single or married women could not independently sue in court or make their own economic transactions. As members of households, they were placed under the practical control of their fathers, husbands, or male guardians. However, Roman-Dutch law permitted women to sue in courts and to participate in the economy as long as their spouses or guardians had formally or informally empowered them to act as their substitutes. It was in this context, as members of households and as representatives of their husbands, that Dutch women took part in the frontier exchange economy of New Netherland.393

The surviving Dutch records therefore contain many references to Dutch women who closely interacted with natives. Because these sources are either court documents or the formal correspondence of the colonial authorities, the available evidence primarily uncovers women who had trespassed company laws and ordinances. For instance, on May 7, 1652, “Volckgen Jans,” the wife of baker Jan van Hoesem, was allowed by the court of Fort Orange to “erect a small bark house on her lot,” in which Indian visitors could be housed during handelstijd. Similarly, during a court session at Fort Orange on Tuesday July 20, 1655, Catelijn Sanders was accused of tempting “a certain Indian” into participation of women in the local economy of colonial Anglo-America, see Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982).

bartering beavers by illegally presenting him with a gift. The court-member Sander Leendertz was excluded from the deliberations because he was married to Catelijn. As these two examples reveal, both ordinary as well as socially prominent Dutch women closely interacted with natives. 394

New Netherland women also participated in the contentious trade in liquor and firearms. Either as business partners of their husbands or as tavernkeepers, Dutch women frequently peddled alcoholic beverages to Indians. In August 1657, the Fort Orange court sought to discover a recent seller of liquor to a group of visiting Indians. The magistrates were especially upset by this transaction because the Indians had become drunk and had “committed many acts of insolence” during the Sunday church service. The Fort Orange court officials tracked the culprits down with the help of a Mohawk man named Kanigeragae, who led them to the Beverwijck residence of Marten Bierkaecker and his New England-born wife Susanna Janssen. In the examination by a court officer, Susanna admitted to having exchanged “three pints of beer, brandy, French and Spanish wine, mixed together,” with an Indian in return for a beaver. Other court cases indicate that New Netherland women often ignored colonial ordinances that prohibited the sale of alcohol to Native Americans. 395

Dutch women were actively involved in the gun-trade. In April 1648, the company directors in Amsterdam wrote a letter to Stuyvesant in which they warned him


395 Gehring, Fort Orange Court Minutes, 1652-1660, 323-325, 328. See also Jacobs and Shattuck, “Beavers for Drink,” 101. For other court cases see Shaw, “Building New Netherland,” 118-120.
to look out for the woman Teuntge Juriaensen, “who goes over [to New Netherland] with a large family,” and no less than 12 guns and 50 pounds of gunpowder and lead. According to Teuntge, she needed this impressive arsenal “for the defense of her family in time of need.” The WIC directors were very skeptical of this assertion since they expected that she was going to sell the arms and ammunition to the Indians as soon as she would arrive in New Netherland. In another incident in July 1656, the Colonial Council at Fort Amsterdam obtained information about a certain unmarried woman from The Hague and her male associate who had recently sold ten guns to the Indians.396

Like the colonists, those Indians who frequently interacted with their Dutch neighbors formed a cross-section of their communities. Although the seventeenth-century Native American peoples of the mid-Atlantic region did not document their activities in writing, some of the surviving Dutch records show that the Indians who interacted with them were not limited to male traders, prominent warleaders, or spokesmen. Many of the natives who functioned as postmen on behalf of colonial officials were probably ordinary young Indian men. In addition, Dutch sources sometimes reveal that Indian delegations that came down to colonial towns for handelstijd usually consisted of men and women and often included extended families. For example, in August 1660, Fort Orange court magistrates investigated a case in which the Beverwijck resident Adriaen Jansen van Leyden was suspected of mishandling a person described as an unnamed “Indian woman with beavers.” This native woman had originally visited Beverwijck to exchange beaver furs with one Volkert Jansen, but she was forced to leave her beaver furs at Jansen van

Leyden’s residence after an Indian middleman had “enticed her [to go to van Leyden’s house] by presenting her with a string of black wampum.”

It is perhaps not so surprising that native men as well as women and prominent leaders as well as ordinary Indians frequently interacted with their Dutch neighbors. Since the Dutch colonists had an ample and varied supply of desirable trade goods, many Indians were logically attracted to visit Dutch communities to obtain them. As James Axtell has reminded us, “The Indians of the Eastern Woodlands experienced a consumer revolution every bit as revolutionary as that experienced by their European suppliers, though not identical in every respect, and they did so many years earlier, usually as soon as the commercial colonists founded trading posts, comptoirs, and nascent settlements.”

For many Algonquians and Iroquoians, the diverse goods and foods that were provided by the Dutch offered not only conspicuous values but also practical ones. Because there was no male dominated merchant-class in the largely egalitarian Indian societies of Northeastern North America, both native men and women eagerly participated in the exchange economy with the Dutch. The important status of the Dutch as suppliers of valuable goods was clearly demonstrated by the word that the Iroquois used to describe their Dutch neighbors. According to the previously mentioned minister Megapolensis, the Mohawks “call us Assirioni, that is, cloth-makers, or Charistooni, that is, iron-workers, because our people first brought cloth and iron among them.”

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397 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 523. For the role of Indian women, see also Shaw, “Building New Netherland,” 145-146.

4. Religious Conversations

Religion provided another arena in which Dutch colonists and Indians came into close contact. In contrast to Brazil, very few Dutch Calvinist missionaries functioned as intercultural mediators in New Netherland. As we have seen, a large number of Protestant ministers and lay-preachers worked in Brazil. Only a handful of Calvinist ministers actively proclaimed the gospel among the Iroquois and Algonquian peoples in New Netherland. Several historians have argued that the absence of any extensive missionary activities in New Netherland was typical of the Dutch obsession with commercial exploitation in the early modern world. Still, by comparing the Protestant Reformed missionary program in Brazil with that in North America, it is clear that there were other reasons why New Netherland was such an unattractive mission field for Calvinist preachers. First, while the challenge to turn the Catholic colony of Portuguese Brazil into a Protestant bulwark attracted a large number of zealous Calvinist missionaries, no such religious and political motives existed in mid-Atlantic North America. Instead, Eastern North America was colonized by the fellow Protestant nation-states of England, and to a lesser extent, Sweden. The (Catholic) French presence remained very small throughout the period of Dutch colonization.399

399 Historians who have argued that the Dutch were only interested in commercial affairs and not in converting Indians include Dennis, Cultivating a Landscape of Peace, 142; and Denys Delâge, Bitter Feast: Amerindians and Europeans in Northeastern North America, 1600-64 (trans. from the French by Jane Brierley), (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1993), 117; and Oliver A. Rink, “Private Interest and Godly Gain: The West India Company and the Dutch Reformed Church in New Netherland, 1624-1664,” New York History 75 (1994): 245-264. For a much more balanced view of the role of religion in the Dutch colonization of New
Second, whereas Brazil was an established and profitable colony with a considerable number of European colonists and towns, New Netherland remained a frontier region in which the Dutch had only established several small settlements scattered over a large territory. For many Calvinists, New Netherland was therefore an isolated backwater. Finally, the various Indian peoples of New Netherland had not been exposed to any Christian missionization prior to Dutch contact. Even though the hated Jesuits had indoctrinated the Brazilian Indians, the activities had at least made Indians familiar with the basic tenets of Christianity. This was in marked contrast with North America, where the Dutch Reformed dominees sought to convert a population for whom Christianity was a completely alien religion.\(^{400}\)

Despite the small number of Protestant preachers in New Netherland, Indians and colonists frequently discussed religious issues with each other. As the historian Karen Kupperman has recently pointed out, both Europeans and Indians were very curious about the other’s religious beliefs during the early contact period. This was no different in New Netherland. Because of the significance of the frontier exchange economy in New Netherland, colonists and Indians were in frequent interaction with each other. Since religious beliefs played an important role in the daily lives of both Dutch colonists and

\(^{400}\) For the argument that Brazil was much more attractive than New Netherland as a missionary terrain for Calvinist preachers, see Willem Frijhoff, *Wegen van Evert Willemsz: Een Hollands weeskind of zoek naar zichzelf, 1607-1647* (Nijmegen: Sun, 1995), 512.
natives, it is not surprising that the two sides often discussed each other’s religious attitudes.401

Using the simplified Indian trade languages, Calvinist preachers as well as Dutch colonists held discussions with Indian individuals in New Netherland about religious matters that showed a considerable degree of sophistication. For instance, in a letter to one of his patrons in the United Provinces, dominee Jonas Michielsz or Michaëlius in August 1628 noted that the natives of New Netherland believed in “the spirit which in their language they call Menetto, under which title they comprehend everything that is subtle and crafty and beyond human skill and power.” Although the Calvinist Michaëlius considered the Indian’s religious beliefs to be “so much witchcraft, divination, sorcery and wicked arts,” his rudimentary definition of the Algonquian term “Menetto” or Manitou to describe the supernatural forces in which the North American natives believed, implies that Michaëlius must have held at least several conversations with local Indians about their religion.402

Similarly, during his tenure as minister at Rensselaerswijck from 1642 to 1648, the previously mentioned minister Megapolensis emphasized that he and other Dutch colonists frequently met with their Mohawk neighbors. Although Megapolensis observed that “they are so very cruel to their enemies, they are friendly to us and we have no dread of them.” Revealing the extent of the close daily Indian-Dutch interactions, Megapolensis described how “We go with them into the woods, we meet with each other, sometimes at


402 Letter from Michaëlius to Adrianus Smoutius, minister in Amsterdam, August 11, 1628, transcribed and translated in A. Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, Founder of the Church in New Netherland (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1926), 132. See also Kupperman, Indians and English, 116.
an hour or two’s walk from any houses, and think no more about it than as if we met with a Christian.” Through these face-to-face encounters Megapolensis obtained enough familiarity with the Mohawks to write several letters detailing some of the customs and practices of his Indian neighbors. In these letters, which were published as a pamphlet in the province of Holland in 1644, Megapolensis provided considerable detail about the religious beliefs of the Mohawks, such as, their offerings to spiritual beings as well as a short account of the Iroquois creation story. Like other contemporary Europeans who believed that the Indian religions found their origin in the Judeo-Christian revelation, Megapolensis also attempted to find similarities between Indian and Christian stories. At one point the dominee noted that “the other day an old woman came to our house” who told him and other Dutchmen a garbled story about the murder by God of his own brother. Seeking to interpret this confusing account through a Christian analogy, Megapolensis concluded “I suppose this fable took its rise from Cain and Abel.”

Lay colonists also sometimes held conversations with Native Americans about religious issues. Adriaen van der Donck, a university educated official of Rensselaerswijck and prominent colonist, described in his Beschrijvinghe van Nieuw-Nederlant (Description of New Netherland, 1655) how he had held discussions with

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native elders about the belief in the afterlife. According to Van der Donck, the Indians “acknowledge and belief that the soul comes from and is given by God, and these are things that one sometimes can hear from them during encounters, if one speaks to some old and sensible among them.” At the same time, Van der Donck emphasized that he was unable to talk about religious topics with the “average [Indian] man and the youth.” In addition, Van der Donck lamented that “one could perhaps obtain more [religious] information from them, if one could better understand their language.” Despite these linguistic problems, the examples of the Dutch Reformed ministers and Van der Donck demonstrate that some Indians and colonists in New Netherland were curious about each other’s religious beliefs and tried to learn more about them.404

5. Cross-Cultural Liaisons

One final form of intercultural contact in New Netherland that deserves special attention concerned intimate relations. Contrary to some scholarly assertions, sexual relations between Dutch men and Native American women appear to have been common in New Netherland. At the height of the Algonquian-Dutch war in March 1643, the experienced trader David Pietersz de Vries met with several western Long Island Algonquian leaders to discuss a possible peace. During the negotiations one of the Indian spokesmen told De Vries that in the period before the Company had built permanent

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forts, Dutch traders often established close intimate relations with native women. According to the unnamed Algonquian orator, the Indians had given Dutch visitors “their daughters to sleep with, by whom they had begotten children, and there roved many an Indian who was begotten by a Swanneken [the Algonquian name for Europeans], but our people had become so villainous as to kill their own blood.”  

Although the Algonquian spokesman may have exaggerated his assertion to illustrate how much Dutch-Indian relations had deteriorated over the years, other Dutch sources reveal that cross-cultural sexual relations were widespread. In his “Short Account of the Mohawk Indians”, Megapolensis complained about the sexual licentiousness of Mohawk women. The Dutch Reformed minister was especially upset because “The women are exceedingly addicted to whoring; they will lie with a man for the value of one, two, or three schillings [a Dutch monetary unit], and our Dutchmen run after them very much.” The extent of intimate liaisons in New Netherland was also demonstrated by attempts of colonial authorities to prohibit them. In December 1638, the fiscaal or Company prosecutor, accused sergeant Nicolaes Coorn based at Fort Amsterdam of theft and adultery. Coorn had not only bartered WIC goods “with the wilden for private gain,” but he also had failed to set “a good moral example to his soldiers” by having had “at divers times … Indian women and Negresses sleep entire nights with him in his bed.”

405 For studies asserting that intimate relations were rare in New Netherland, see Nan A. Rothschild, “Social Distance Between Dutch Settlers and Native Americans,” in: Van Dongen, One Man’s Trash is Another Man’s Treasure, 190-193; Dennis, Cultivating a Landscape of Peace, chapter 5. For De Vries, see the excerpts of his account in NNN, 231.

Similarly, in a letter to his main executive at the colony of Rensselaerswyck, the Amsterdam-based patroon Kiliaen van Rensselaer warned his great-nephew Arent van Curler in May 1639 about the moral dangers of closely associating oneself with Indian women. Because sexual relations with the wilden “are a great abomination to the Lord God and kill the souls of the Christians when they debauch themselves with them,” Van Rensselaer instructed Van Curler to “work and move in the council that an ordinance be issued imposing severe fines and punishment on those who are found guilty of it.” Van Curler apparently never adequately implemented or enforced these ordinances because Van Rensselaer instructed new measures against “the unchastity with heathen women and girls,” in September 1643. Despite these ordinances, intimate relations persisted at the Dutch communities on the Upper Hudson Valley. In March 1659 Evert Tesselaer admitted to the wife of Jacob van Leeuwen in the presence of an Amsterdam notary that her husband had committed adultery with a wildinne at Fort Orange. One year later, director-general Stuyvesant complained to his superiors in Amsterdam that a colonist, commonly known as “Jacob, my friend”, had fathered several children with a Susquehannock woman with whom he was living. Although Stuyvesant was primarily angry at Jacob for having made off with a large sum of money that had been given to him for trade with the Indians at the Delaware River, the director-general also strongly morally disapproved of Jacob’s liaison with a native woman and his residence among the wilden.407

These sexual encounters were not limited to traders, soldiers, or lower Company personnel but also included prominent colonial officials. In his “Representation of New Netherland,” the university-educated colonist Adriaen van der Donck scornfully described how the influential secretary of the Company government Cornelis van Tienhoven had established extensive intimate relations with native women. According to Van der Donck, the Secretary had especially scandalized colonial society because “he has run about as [if] an Indian, with [only] a little cloth and a covering for his privates, [all] for the love of the whores with which he has had so much to do.” Another example of a prominent colonist who entered into cross-cultural sexual relations was the Rensselaerswijck official Arent van Curler himself. Despite the instructions of his superior and great-uncle not to engage in any immoral relations with native women, Van Curler engaged in a liaison with an Indian woman out of which a child was born. Although the details of this relationship are unknown, a local court record of 1676 refers to an unnamed Indian girl as “Correlaer’s daughter.”

Some scholars have attributed these extensive intercultural sexual relations to the numerical shortage of European women in New Netherland. Because Dutch and other European women and families did not migrate in large numbers to New Netherland until the cessation of the Algonquian-Dutch wars in the mid-1640s, the sexual imbalance in the colony led many sailors, soldiers, traders, and Company officials to seek out native partners. Recent scholarship has pointed out that this demographic explanation leaves out the indigenous female perspective as well as the nature of the intercultural relationship.

Although some Dutchmen may have been attracted to native women in the absence of many available European women, most men entered into liaisons with Indian women and girls because it facilitated the frontier exchange economy. Native Americans traditionally used temporary intimate relations and formal marriages to strengthen bonds with outsiders and allies. By promoting liaisons between their women and Dutchmen, native communities attempted to solidify relations with the influential Europeans who supplied them with valuable trade goods. For their part, native women hoped to obtain more cloths and other items by forming an intimate arrangement with a Dutchman. While colonial authorities and Calvinist preachers condemned these sexual unions as immoral, most Dutchmen rightly concluded that liaisons with native women provided them with easier access to beaver furs and other precious items.409

Because Dutch colonists and natives relied on each other to acquire necessary and valuable trade goods, intercultural relations in New Netherland were frequent and widespread. Both natives and Dutchmen often held conversations with each other about religious matters. In addition, Indians visited Dutch colonial communities regularly and often stayed overnight at their residences during handelstijd. To facilitate the exchange of goods and foodstuffs, native women and Dutchmen even entered into temporary or long-term liaisons. These intimate encounters not only facilitated the frontier exchange economy, but also brought Indians and colonists closer together.

6. Distrust and Contempt in the Frontier Exchange System

By frequently interacting with each other on a personal level, Native Americans and colonists often crossed the cultural divide that existed between Europeans and Indians in New Netherland. In the light of these common, face-to-face relations, it may seem as if both sides easily got along without too many problems. Dutch colonists not only shared vessels with natives or invited Indians into their houses, but Dutchmen also established intimate relations with native women. However, when taking a closer look at the actual attitudes of the colonists toward the Indians, it becomes quickly clear that sympathy and respect were lacking. Even colonists who sometimes interacted with Indians in the frontier exchange economy physically abused and exploited the wilden to obtain more profits. In addition, many colonists mistreated the Indians. The frontier exchange economy not only brought colonists and Indians closer together, it also led to distrust and irritation on the part of the Dutch.

In the climate of intense competition to gain access to the valuable furs and wampum, colonists often tried to gain exclusive control over the Indians’ trade. This was particularly the case in the Dutch communities that were closely located to the peoples of the Iroquois League. After Beverwijck and Fort Orange suddenly in the late 1650s received fewer beaver skins from their Mohawk trading partners in the late 1650s due to Indian overhunting and Iroquois warfare against neighboring native peoples, both large traders and individual colonists began to harass Indians. In his study of Iroquois-Dutch relations, Matthew Dennis pointed out “For the most part, large and small traders looked to their own interests. They viewed their relationship with Indians narrowly,
demonstrating more concern for the personal encounters than for the greater political relationship between their two nations.” Those colonists who could afford it often hired special *bos-* or *woudlopers* (woodsmen) to intercept Mohawk men and women carrying furs before they reached Beverwijck. These brokers were poor colonists who, if necessary, physically harassed the natives to obtain their furs. Those colonists who could not afford brokers occasionally intimidated and even beat up Indians themselves in order to lay their hands on the coveted beaver furs. Repeatedly issued ordinances by the Beverwijck magistrates against the harassment of visiting Indians strongly suggest that these incidents happened frequently during *handelstijd.*410

The abuse of Native Americans was not limited to Beverwijck. In September 1660, the Colonial Council at Fort Amsterdam fined Nicolaes de Meyer for wounding an Indian who had come to visit his residence to barter. According to the court documents, De Meyer had attacked the Indian because he had literally run over De Meyer’s son. When colonial officials pointed out that the native trader had done this only to avoid De Meyer’s lunging dog, De Meyer argued that “he, as a father, could not bear that his son should be thrown [down] by a savage.” As this incident revealed, the colonists not only abused Indians to obtain more profits, they also viewed them as culturally inferior. De Meyer’s prosecution is an example of colonial authorities responding aggressively

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410 Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace,* 158-161 (quotation at page 158). Jacobs and Shattuck, “Beavers for Drink,” 98-101. Occasionally Dutch traders also hired Indian brokers. It is unclear from the sources if Indian *boslopers* hired by Dutch traders also intimidated the Mohawks. For the increasing Iroquois wars against their Indian neighbors, see Brandão, *Your Fyre Shall Burn No More*.”
against individual colonists who mistreated Indians. Authorities were rightly afraid that these incidents could lead to Indian retaliations.\textsuperscript{411}

The Company government similarly tried to stop colonists who recklessly endangered intercultural relations by aggressively bartering liquor to the natives. Despite continuous ordinances prohibiting the sale of alcoholic drinks to Native Americans for fear of sparking intercultural conflicts, individual traders, townsmen, farmers, and even magistrates continued to peddle brandy, beer, and wine to native men and women. This problem was not limited to Beverwijck but was common throughout the colony. In June 1643 Director-General Kieft and the Colonial Council based at Manhattan complained that “large quantities of strong liquors are daily sold to the Indians, from which practice serious difficulties have already arisen in this country and it is to be feared further calamities may result.” Some colonists were repeatedly arrested and fined for having sold liquor to the Indians. During the *handelstijd*-season of 1658 one Poulus Janssen was imprisoned for having “ventured several times to sell brandy to the Indians, which is a matter of very dangerous consequence, which cannot be tolerated in a country where justice prevails.”\textsuperscript{412}

Although the prosecution of individuals like Janssen revealed the strong concern of the Company government to maintain order in colonial society, Dutch authorities were genuinely worried about Indian complaints regarding the ongoing sale of liquor. The traffic in alcohol by ordinary colonists proved especially contentious at the small Dutch

\textsuperscript{411} NYSA, NYCM 9: Court Minutes: 413, quoted in: Shaw, “Building New Netherland,” 259. See also O’Callaghan, *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts*, 218. (De Meyer case).

community at Esopus on the Hudson River midway between Beverwijck and Manhattan. Since the early 1650s, several colonial farmers had been attracted to the Esopus region because of its fertile agricultural lands. However, the local Algonquian Indians - to whom the Dutch referred to as “Esopus”, “Katskill”, or “River Indians” - were strongly suspicious of the Dutch intruders on their lands. When traders from Beverwijck descended to the Esopus region to exchange liquor for furs with the Esopus Indians, both Dutch and Indian leaders became therefore alarmed. In February 1654, Fort Orange court officials interrogated several eyewitnesses who had seen or heard that one Christoffel Davits had sold alcohol to the Esopus Indians.

The Fort Orange magistrates were especially irritated by Davits, because “the sachems of the Indians there [at Esopus] … forbade him to sell any more brandy to the Indians and begged him not to do so, as they got into great trouble and disputes with one another while being drunk.” Despite the protests of native leaders, court officials noted that Davits had continued to provide brandy to the natives, and, as a result, “some trouble among the Christians and the Indians has resulted therefrom.” The continuing illicit liquor trade by ordinary colonists to the Esopus Indians eventually sparked a series of deadly intercultural wars, which were only brought to a conclusion in 1664 through a combination of Dutch military campaigns of attrition and negotiations by Dutch, Mohawk, and Mahican mediators. Although the frontier exchange economy brought colonists and Indians closely together, native-Dutch interactions were not necessarily peaceful. As the example of Christoffel Davits shows, through their selfish and
exploitative behavior, the irregular go-betweens often contributed to intercultural tensions.413

Dutch colonists often also exploited Indian messengers and temporary workers. The ordinance of September 1648 concerning the proper payment to native laborers, was issued by Stuyvesant and the Colonial Council because of “the great complaints [that] are daily made by Indians and natives to the honorable lord director general and councilors, that some inhabitants of New Netherland employ the natives and use them in their service, and often dismiss them unrewarded after their service is completed.” The colonial authorities were especially concerned because the Indian protesters threatened “to pay themselves, or to avenge themselves by other improper means.” Although company officials and some individual colonists compensated native couriers adequately, colonists often felt uneasy about relying upon couriers in time of conflict. During the first Esopus-Dutch war of 1659-1660, the military commander Derck Smitt at the town of Esopus complained about the unreliability of Mahican messengers. “Nietonnoret, Sachem of the Mahikanders,” had promised Smitt to send “another wilde to carry the letters the next day, but the wilde never came to fetch the letters.” Smitt angrily concluded that “we behave ourselves as friends but they show themselves as scoundrels.”414

The low regard that Dutch colonists held for Indian workers was also revealed by the increasing use of native adults and children as indentured servants. Because of its

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413 This and the preceding paragraph are based on Gehring, Fort Orange Court Minutes, 90-91 (interrogation about Christoffel Davits); Trelease, Indian Affairs in Colonial New York, 148-169; Otto, “New Netherland Frontier,” 225-233.

danger of provoking Indian hostilities, the Company government prohibited the enslavement of natives, and the colonists apparently refrained from doing so. There is only one instance in all of the available documentary records in which the Dutch enslaved Native Americans, and this case involved the shipment of a group of Esopus Indian prisoners of war to the Dutch Caribbean colony at Curaçao in 1660. However, beginning in the 1640s, colonial households in New Netherland sometimes included native men and women as indentured servants. Because of the continuing shortage of European laborers in colonial society, well-to do farmers and townspeople were eager to obtain not only African slaves or servants but also Native Americans. Because many Indian communities in New Netherland had faced severe crises due to epidemic diseases, wars, and a growing dependency upon European goods, some natives were forced to seek employment among neighboring colonists. Although these Indian individuals were not enslaved, their status was comparable to that of unskilled and menial laborers, and their pay was usually below that of their European counterparts. In addition, whereas European servants were often instructed in reading and writing, Indians generally did not receive any education in literacy from their colonial employers.415

By frequently abusing and mistreating the Native Americans to obtain more beaver skins or to sell more liquor, colonists revealed their inconsistent attitudes towards Indians. Even though the colonists were dependent upon the bartering system with the natives to obtain wealth and pay outstanding debts, Dutch men and women from all social ranks did not refrain from intimidating their Indian neighbors or using them as cheap wage laborers. While the Dutch saw the Indians as useful trading partners, they

415 This paragraph is primarily based on Strong, Algonquian Peoples, 269, 276-287. See also Zegenrijk Gewest, 333-334 (Curaçao shipment and examples of Indian servitude in New Netherland).
simultaneously exploited their native neighbors in order to obtain more wealth and status in colonial society.

7. Intercultural Violence and Warfare

Violence and warfare revealed most dramatically the inconsistent attitudes of colonists and Indians. Throughout the history of New Netherland there are many instances of violent Indian-Dutch conflicts. Some of the incidents were only minor infractions, but others led to open warfare that cost the lives of hundreds. Together these disturbances demonstrated that the frontier exchange economy did not necessarily bring about a better understanding between Indians and colonists. Despite close and frequent interactions between ordinary colonists and Indians, both sides often perpetrated excessive violence toward each other.

This became painfully clear in the Manhattan area during the late 1630s and early 1640s. In September 1639, director-general Willem Kieft decided to impose a tax on local Indians. Kieft argued that the local Algonquians should pay an annual tribute of corn, beavers, and wampum to the WIC to offset the cost of protecting the coastal Indians from attacks by native peoples who lived further up the Hudson Valley. Although no company records survive that document Dutch military assistance to these Indians during the 1630s, it is possible that the WIC tried to reduce intertribal warfare that destabilized trade. From Kieft’s perspective, this taxation was therefore not unreasonable. Moreover, the imposition of protection-taxes upon local populations was customary in many parts of the war-torn United Provinces.
Another reason Kieft imposed the controversial tribute was that he hoped to end Dutch dependence on informal exchange with Indians. Since the colonial population of New Netherland had experienced some growth in the late 1630s, the director-general was concerned about both possible food shortages and the continuing dependence upon the Indians for corn and other necessary foodstuffs. To avoid the strategically dangerous and also humiliating situation in which the Dutch colonizers depended on local natives for survival, Kieft imposed the tax. Demonstrating the Algonquians’ dependence upon the Dutch, the director-general could present the Dutch and European nations alike.416

However, the Algonquian peoples in the Manhattan area strongly and aggressively resisted Kieft’s tribute. According to an exposé written by prominent colonists criticizing Kieft’s policies, the Algonquians argued that “they were not obliged to give it [the tribute] to the director, or to the Dutch,” because “they had allowed us [the Dutch] to remain peaceably in their country, that they had never demanded a recompense from us, and that, for that reason, we were under obligations to them, and not they to us.” The tension over the tribute was only one of many manifestations of the deep-seated anxieties. The Algonquians in the Manhattan area were also concerned about the growth of the colonial settlements. In a warning to their Dutch neighbors, the Algonquians pointed out that even if they had “ceded to you the country you are living in, we yet remain masters of what we have retained for ourselves.”417

416 This and the preceding paragraph are based on: Zegenrijk Gewest, 133; Frijhoff, Wegen van Evert Willemsz, 715-717; Trelease, Indian Affairs in Colonial New York, chapter 3.

417 For the quotes from the Algonquians, see the anonymous pamphlet “Breeden Raedt aen de Vereenighde Nederlandsche Provintien,” (Antwerp, 1649). I have used an English translation of this pamphlet published as “Extracts from a work called Breeden Raedt,” in: E.B. O’Callaghan, ed. The Documentary History of the State of New-York, volume 4 (Albany: Charles van Benthuyssen, 1851), 101. This pamphlet protested, among other things, Kieft’s handling of
Yet another source of conflict was the unwillingness of either side to control their domesticated animals. While livestock from colonial farmers often strayed on Indian corn fields, dogs owned by Native Americans sometimes attacked cows and poultry on Dutch farms. Because neither side refused to resolve these tensions peacefully, intercultural violence soon broke out in and around Manhattan. From the spring of 1640 until the summer of 1645 the Dutch and Algonquians waged war against each other that cost hundreds of predominately Indian lives and plunged New Netherland into a deep political crisis.418

Although most historians have blamed Kieft for provoking the war and have aptly named the conflict “Kieft’s War”, it is important to emphasize that most colonists in New Netherland supported the controversial Indian policies of the director-general. During the intercultural war, a considerable number of Company soldiers and colonists showed their hatred and distrust of Indians by destroying native villages, plundering stored Indian food resources, and perpetrating massacres in which hundreds of native men, women, and children were killed. Likewise, Algonquians also revealed their contempt for colonists. Throughout Kieft’s War, young Algonquian warriors often provoked the Dutch by attacking individual colonists or isolated farms.419

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419 Haefeli, “Kieft’s War,” is the best recent interpretation of the conflict.
These incidents in turn led to Dutch retaliations and eventually spiraled into a cycle of cross-cultural violence and warfare that engulfed the region around New Amsterdam. The small incidents quickly turned into a major conflict. In the spring of 1640, some members of the Raritans attempted to ambush the crew of a company sloop that visited their lands every season to obtain beaver skins. When some pigs were soon after killed under suspect circumstances on Staten Island, Kieft and the Colonial Council resolved to send a large punishing raid against the Raritans. Although the company troops were led by the influential WIC secretary Cornelis van Tienhoven, who wanted to avoid a costly frontier war, the soldiers “wished to kill and plunder” according to one contemporary Dutch account. After an unsuccessful attempt by Van Tienhoven to prevent any bloodshed, the soldiers mutinied, killed several Indians and brutally mutilated the captive brother of one of the Raritan sachems. In retaliation, the Raritans attacked the isolated bouwerij, or farm complex, of the prominent trader and colonist David Pietersz de Vries on Staten Island, killing four colonists and burning down the compound.420

Because Kieft’s War has been the topic of many historical studies, I will not here discuss this tragic conflict in great detail. However, it is important to emphasize that the ongoing violence dramatically showed that the frontier exchange economy was unable to do away with the strong feelings of mutual contempt that the Dutch and Indians held toward each other. When several loosely allied Algonquian bands, the Wecquasgeeks,

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420 On the argument that soldiers felt dependent upon the Indians, see Haefeli, “Kieft’s War,” 32-33. For the attack on the Raritans, see “From the ‘Korte Historiael ende Journaels Aenteyckeninge,’ by David Pietersz. De Vries, 1633-1643 (1655),” NNN, 208-209. See also Frijhoff, Wegen van Evert Willemsz, 717. For an insightful discussion of the names of the different Algonquian bands who lived on and around Manhattan, see Robert Steven Grumet, Native American Place Names in New York City (New York: Museum of the City of New York, 1981).
Hackensacks, and Tapps, fled to the vicinity of the WIC fort at southern Manhattan to escape deadly raids from their Mahican enemies in February 1643, Dutch colonists at New Amsterdam feared that the fleeing Algonquians were attacking them. Seeing an opportunity to subjugate their Algonquian neighbors once and for all, Kieft and a group of prominent colonists resolved to annihilate the Indians who were seeking shelter with the Dutch. On the evening of February 25, 1643, a large group of soldiers and colonists attacked the unsuspecting Algonquian refugees at Pavonia (present Jersey City) and Curler’s Hook (presently the lower East Side of Manhattan). During this nighttime attack more than one hundred Indians were reportedly massacred, including women and children. According to Joachim Pietersz Kuyper, an anti-Kieft colonist, some German Company soldiers even killed an Indian boy who had initially been saved by a sorrowful Dutchman.421

Since the colonists and Company soldiers had killed so many non-combatants at Pavonia and Curler’s Hook, the surviving Algonquian bands now allied with each other to retaliate against the Dutch. In the ensuing guerilla war the Indians deployed hit and run raids against isolated colonial farms and settlements. When the war had become practically uncontrollable for the Dutch in the fall of 1643, the Company government hired the expert services of Captain John Underhill. This English military officer had been the main architect of the devastating Puritan attack against the main Pequot town in Connecticut in 1637. Because of his proven experience as an Indian fighter, Kieft and his close associates quickly allowed Underhill to resolve the war his own way. During several surprise attacks on Algonquian towns on Long Island and southwestern

421 The Pavonia massacre is discussed most recently in Haefeli, “Kieft’s War,” 26-27; and Frijhoff, *Wegen van Evert Willemsz*, 721-726.
Connecticut, colonial militias, WIC troops, and hired English soldiers led by Underhill killed hundreds of Indians, including women and children. Company soldiers even cruelly tortured to death several Algonquian prisoners of war on one occasion in April 1644. Despite their heavy losses, the Indians continued to harass Dutch colonists in the Manhattan area. It was only the intervention of Native American mediators that brought Kieft’s War to a close in the spring of 1645.422

The excessive intercultural violence that engulfed the New Amsterdam region from 1640 to 1645 bypassed the Dutch communities on the Upper Hudson Valley. At the colonial centers of Beverwijck, Fort Orange, and Rensselaerswijck, the Mohawk Iroquois and other native peoples continued to visit the colonists to exchange a variety of goods. Dutch-Indian relations in this region remained amicable because of the thriving fur trade. Whereas the trade in animal skins at New Amsterdam increasingly declined during the 1630s due to overhunting, the Mohawks were able to supply their Dutch neighbors with an increasing amount of valuable beaver furs during the 1640s and 1650s. In return, the Mohawks received large amounts of clothes and firearms, the latter making them the most heavily armed Indian people in the mid-Atlantic region.423

422 On Kieft’s War from the fall of 1643 to its conclusion in 1645, see Haefeli, “Kieft’s War”; Frijhoff, Wegen van Evert Willemsz, 579-580, 726-730. These two studies also discuss the motives for why the soldiers treated the Indians so cruelly. For the war in general see Paul Andrew Otto, “New Netherland Frontier: Europeans and Native Americans along the Lower Hudson River,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1995), chapter 4. For Underhill, see Laurence M. Hauptman, “John Underhill: A Psychological Portrait of an Indian Fighter, 1597-1672,” The Hudson Valley Regional Review 9, No. 2 (1992): 101-111. On the torture of Algonquian prisoners by Company soldiers, see “Extracts from a work called Breeden Raedt,” 106.

423 For a numerical analysis of the fur trade in New Netherland, see Zegenrijk Gewest, 180-183.
However, despite the generally peaceful Indian-Dutch relations in the Upper Hudson Valley, the region did see violence and mutual resentment. As we have seen, Beverwijck residents often harassed and beat up visiting Indians in order to obtain their beaver skins. Since the Indians generally visited Dutch colonial towns to exchange goods and services, they usually did not physically intimidate or abuse their hosts. However, some Indians violently turned against their Dutch neighbors, particularly when drunk. For example, Gerrit van Wencom declared to the court of Rensselaerswijck “that a certain Mahican, whom he [found] at [Aert] Jacobsz's, at Bethlehem, on Wednesday, the 8th of December 1649, [said Indian] being quite drunk with anise water, assaulted and fell upon him in cold blood and almost strangled him, in such a way that his head was extremely swollen.” Although Van Wencom was eventually saved “by another Indian,” he emphasized that this Indian had only saved him “accidentally” and not because he wanted to break up the fight.424

In addition, the Indians often strongly voiced their displeasure if they felt mistreated by the colonists. In January 1651, the court of Rensselaerswijck investigated the slaughter of Thomas Chambers’ cattle by unidentified Indians. On two occasions in November 1648 and 1649 the Indians had shot some of Chambers’ cows and mares. Although it is unclear why the Indians killed the cattle in this instance, Native Americans had previously killed cattle or destroyed colonial property outside Fort Orange to voice their displeasure if they felt unfairly treated by the Dutch. All these examples indicate that Dutch-Indian relations on the Upper Hudson Valley were not always peaceful and

amicable. While colonists attempted to pressure Indians out of valuable pelts, Indians responded by destroying colonial property.\(^{425}\)

Intercultural animosities also occurred at the Delaware River or Zuidrivier. In March 1660, the Company government dispatched the fiscaal, or public prosecutor, Nicasius de Sille to the Zuidrivier area to punish “two so-called Christians,” who had been accused of killing three local Indians nearby the colonial town of New Amstel. Although we don’t know what happened to the suspects, the fact that the murder occurred nearby New Amstel indicated that the Indians were probably killed when they were trying to visit the town during handelstijd. To avoid any conflict with the Algonquians on the Delaware River, De Sille was even instructed to invite local sachems to witness the planned execution of the two “so-called Christians.”\(^{426}\)

Like their Dutch trading partners, the native peoples of the Zuidrivier region sometimes also revealed their inconsistent attitude toward Indians. Throughout the 1630s and 1640s, the Dutch established important trade relations with the Minquas, an Iroquoian-speaking people who were known as the Susquehannocks by English colonists. While the local Algonquian communities along the Zuidrivier had quickly depleted the fur-bearing animal populations, the Minquas, who lived in what is now eastern Pennsylvania, were able to supply the Dutch with considerable numbers of animal pelts. Minqua-Dutch relations were complicated by the small colony of New Sweden. Because their scarce resources forced the WIC to concentrate most of its colonial activities on

\(^{425}\) Van Laer, *Minutes of the Court of Rensselaerswijck*, 104. For an earlier example of the slaughtering of cattle and destroying of colonial property by Indians at Fort Orange, see Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 90.

\(^{426}\) *DRCHSNY* 12: 295-296. (Delaware murders). See also *Zegenrijk Gewest*, 328; and Shaw, “Building New Netherland,” 258.
Manhattan and Fort Orange, the Company had only a very small presence on the Zuidrivier since the early 1620s. As a result of this neglect, the Swedish Crown, with the aid of important financial capital and technical expertise from former WIC employees, established the small colony of New Sweden on the South River in 1638. Although this Swedish colony was itself dependent for food upon local Algonquians, small groups of Swedish and Finnish colonists settled along the Zuidrivier where they obtained valuable furs from the Minquas. In addition, fur traders from New England occasionally visited the Zuidrivier as well.427

Ever since he replaced Kieft as director-general in New Netherland in 1647, the ambitious Petrus Stuyvesant attempted to neutralize the Swedish colony and the English interlopers. After several unsuccessful campaigns, Stuyvesant was eventually able to conquer New Sweden in September 1655 with the help of military resources supplied by the city of Amsterdam. However, the Minquas and the Zuidrivier Algonquians were angered by Stuyvesant’s action because they were now no longer able to play off the Dutch against the Swedish colonists. While Stuyvesant and most of the Company troops were in the Zuidrivier, the Minquas and the Zuidrivier Algonquians joined into an alliance with the local Algonquians of the Manhattan area and attacked the vulnerable Dutch colonists. During this raid the native warriors killed a considerable number of colonists, captured many others, and destroyed farms and houses. The Indians even


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invaded New Amsterdam where they specifically targeted colonists who had mistreated them.428

When Stuyvesant was notified of this attack he immediately returned to New Amsterdam. Although the company troops were able to secure the town and some of the outlying colonial towns in October 1655, many captives remained in Indian hands. After most of the colonial prisoners were finally exchanged in return for large amounts of gunpowder and other trade goods, the Company government and the colonists in the Manhattan region continued to be fearful of Indian hostilities throughout the late 1650s and early 1660s. As this crisis demonstrated, Indian-Dutch relations on the Delaware River were closely connected to those at New Amsterdam. Moreover, the surprise attack by the natives on New Amsterdam in September 1655 revealed that these intercultural relations continued to be shaped by mutual distrust. For all their close interactions, the Indians and colonists often used violence against each other.429

This volatile relationship also shaped interactions between Dutch colonists and the local Indians at Esopus, midway along the Upper Hudson Valley between Manhattan and Fort Orange. Dutch colonists had been attracted to the potentially rich farmlands at Esopus since the mid-1650s. However, the local Algonquians, whom the Dutch referred to as the “Esopus” or “River Indians,” considered the increasing number of outlying


Dutch farms a threat to their own communities. At the same time, both the colonists and Esopus Indians frequently interacted with each other to obtain valuable goods. While the Dutch settlers acquired beaver furs and foodstuffs, the Esopus natives obtained liquor and textiles. As we have seen, some Esopus Indians also hired themselves out to local farmers in return for alcohol and other trade goods.

Although the frontier exchange economy continued to thrive at Esopus in the late 1650s, the bartering system did not ease intercultural tensions. From 1659 to 1660 and again from 1663 to 1664, the colonists and Esopus Indians fought wars. During these conflicts, both sides sometimes continued to exchange commodities. For example, in the first Esopus War, while hostile native warriors laid a siege around the local Dutch fort, besieged colonists obtained corn from other bands of peaceable Esopus Indians. Despite these instances of ongoing peaceful interactions, or perhaps because they fed a stereotype of native treachery, an increasing mutual hatred eventually shaped Dutch-Esopus relations. During the second Esopus War, both sides committed atrocities, killing non-combatants and burning down villages and crops. In October 1663, New Netherland colonists felt so insecure about their relations with native peoples that rumors circulated in New Amsterdam about an alliance of Esopus, Mahicans, Wecquasgeeks, and other “River savages” who wanted to “burn, to kill everybody or take prisoners, whom they could get.”

As all these examples of intercultural violence and warfare demonstrate, Dutch-Indian relations in New Netherland were never stable for extensive periods. While the

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Upper Hudson Valley escaped the bloody wars of the Manhattan region, even at Fort Orange and Beverwijck natives and colonists often showed their contempt for each other through violence and intimidation. For all their close encounters in the mutually advantageous frontier exchange economy, the peoples were unable to live peacefully together for extensive periods.

8. The Failure of Indian Conversions

Although the frequent discussions suggested that the Indians and Dutch were sincerely interested in each other’s religions, the Indians consistently rejected Protestant evangelism. Despite their conversations about the afterlife and a Supreme Being, the Indians and Dutch openly rejected each other’s religious worldviews. For example, in the letter of August 1628 in which dominee Michaëlius described the Indian beliefs in Manitous, the minister also complained that he had not made any progress in converting the Indians. Michaëlius reported that it was difficult to communicate the idea of God to the natives because “If we speak to them of God, it appears to them like a dream, and we are compelled to speak of Him, not under the name of Menetto, whom they know and serve, for that would be blasphemy, but of one great, yea, most high Sackiema [sachem], by which name they, having no king, call those, who have the command over several hundred among them, who by our people called Sackemakers.” However, when Michaëlius used the Algonquian term for leader to describe God, “some [of the Indians] begin to mutter and shake their heads, as if it were a silly fable, and others, in order to get out of the difficulty with honour and friendship, will say Orith, that is good.”

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431 Eekhof, Jonas Michaëlius, 132-133. The term “sachem” was originally a term used by the Algonquian peoples of Southern New England and Southeastern New York to describe a band
Because of the linguistic and cultural obstacles of translating Christian ideas to the Indians, Michaëlius suggested ignoring the conservative adults and concentrating instead on their children. The strategy of giving indigenous children a Christian education to bring about the conversion of a non-Christian people was an established Christian policy used by both the Catholic and Protestant churches throughout the early modern era. Michaëlius had himself used it in the mid-1620s when he was stationed at a WIC fort on the Guinea coast and baptized two mulatto children. Michaëlius argued that for a successful conversion, Indian children “ought in youth to be separated from their parents, yea, from their whole nation. For without this, they would forthwith be as much accustomed as their elders to the heathenish tricks and devilries, … so that having once, by habit, obtained deep root, they would with great difficulty be brought away from it.” Unfortunately, Michaëlius reported that “this separation is hard to effect, for the parents have strong affection for their children, and are very lo[a]th to part with them, and when this happens, as has already been proved, the parents are never fully contended, but take them away stealthily, or induce them to run away.”

Equally great difficulties in bringing the gospel to the Indians in New Netherland were encountered by Michaëlius’ successor, dominee Evert Willemsz Bogaert, or

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Everhardus Bogardus. As minister of New Amsterdam from 1633 to 1647, Bogardus was an energetic Calvinist preacher who was sincerely committed to the conversion of the non-Christian peoples of the Dutch colony. His strong moral convictions to evangelize “blind heathens” dated back to his childhood, when he underwent a deeply emotional conversion experience as an orphan. But whereas the small African slave population of New Netherland saw his Christian teachings as an opportunity to obtain more freedom and privileges in colonial society, Bogardus apparently did not make any progress with the conversion of the Algonquian or Iroquoian peoples. In correspondence with the Classis Amsterdam, the Calvinist organization in Amsterdam that coordinated the appointment and activities of overseas church personnel, Bogardus mentioned in 1641 that the evangelization of the Indians had not yet been successful. Although there is no surviving correspondence relating to the missionary activities of Bogardus among the Indians, the absence of any letters or documents discussing possible successes indicate that he was unable to convert the natives.433

Bogardus’ evangelization program quickly became a casualty of the bloody war between the Dutch colonists and the Algonquian peoples. Although Bogardus had on one occasion functioned as an official negotiator at a peace conference with Algonquians in March, 1642, and had accused Director Kieft of having perpetrated un-Christian massacres against the Indians, he simultaneously identified more with the European settlers who had suffered from Indian counterattacks than with his native neighbors. In a revealing passage written by Bogardus in October, 1644, as part of an official petition to the Amsterdam directors to replace Kieft with a more capable administrator, the minister

433 The best biography of Bogardus is Frijhoff, Wegen van Evert Willemsz. For the correspondence of 1641, see Wegen van Evert Willemsz, 787. See also Zegenrijk Gewest, 273.
portrayed himself and his fellow colonists as “residing here among thousands of wild and barbaric people, among whom neither mercy nor comfort can be found.” As Algonquian warparties of “bold and insolvent” wilden depopulated the colonial countryside around New Amsterdam, Bogardus concluded that peaceful coexistence with the Indians was unlikely.434

In contrast to Bogardus, Megapolensis was stationed on the Upper Hudson Valley far away from the frontier war raging at New Amsterdam. However, like his colleague, he also soon ran into some insurmountable problems during attempts to convert the Mohawks. In his “Account of the Mohawk Indians”, Megapolensis reported that nearby Mohawks frequently visited his church services out of curiosity about the religion of the Dutch. However, “When we pray, they laugh at us. Some of them despise it entirely; and some, when we tell them what we do when we pray, stand astonished.” The Mohawks, often smoking their tobacco pipes while listening in, were especially confounded when Megapolensis held sermons in front of the colonists. In traditional Iroquois councils, which made decisions based upon an open discussion, it was unacceptable if only one orator dominated the conversation. Those Mohawks who witnessed Megapolensis lecturing his flock could therefore not comprehend why “I stand there alone and make so many words, while none of the rest may speak.” Although Megapolensis tried to counter the Mohawks’ argument by informing them that during the sermon “I tell them that I am

434 Frijhoff, Wegen van Evert Willemsz, 719 (March 1642), 743-744 (quotations, October 1644). Frijhoff (736-737), argues that Bogardus was the author of this petition. See also Zegenrijk Gewest, 137. This document has been translated into English in: DRCHSNY, 1: 209-213, but some of the terms such as “wilden” have been wrongly translated here as “Indians.” For the role of the frontier war upon the evangelization program of Bogardus, see Frijhoff, Wegen, 788. On the frontier war in general, see Haefeli, “Kieft’s War and the Cultures of Violence in Colonial America.”
admonishing the Christians, that they must not steal, nor commit lewdness, nor get drunk, nor commit murder,” the Indians simply responded by asking “‘Why do so many Christians do these things?’”

After his relocation to Manhattan in 1649, Megapolensis committed himself once again to the conversion of Native Americans. Perhaps sobered by his failure to evangelize the Mohawks, Megapolensis, together with another Calvinist preacher named Samuel Drisius, now focused all his attention on the evangelization of a local sachem who had shown interest in Christianity. According to a letter from Megapolensis and Drisius to the Amsterdam Classis of July 25, 1654,

a sachem of the Indians has sojourned for a length of time among us at the Manhattans, who was diligent in learning to read and write, which he learned to do tolerably well. He was also instructed in the principal grounds of the Christian faith, and publicly joined in recitations on the catechism by Christian children. We gave him a Bible that he might peruse it and teach his own countrymen from it. We hoped that in due time he might be the instrument of accomplishing considerable good among the Indians. But we acknowledge that he has only the bare knowledge of the truth, without the practice of godliness. He is greatly inclined to drunkeness, and indeed, is not better than other Indians.

Disappointed in their failure to keep the unidentified Indian sachem interested in Calvinism, Megapolensis and Drisius complained to the Classis of Amsterdam in August 1657, that, “regarding the conversion of the heathens or Indians here, we can say not much.” Moreover, the two ministers concluded that they did not see any possibility of

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435 Megapolensis, “Account of the Mohawk Indians,” In Mohawk Country, 45. See also Hart, “For the Good of Our Souls,” 68-72; Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, 106. On traditional Iroquois councils and political culture, see Idem, chapter 2; and Dennis, Cultivating a Landscape of Peace, chapter 3.

converting the Indians, “until they are brought under control and administration by the power of our people and nation.” As long as the Indians remained politically independent, Megapolensis and Drisus considered the evangelization of Native Americans in New Netherland a hopeless task. Even after the Dutch militarily defeated most of the Algonquian communities around Manhattan in the mid-1640s, the WIC was never able to impose its jurisdiction over these Indian groups. The failure of Company authorities to incorporate the defeated Algonquians into colonial society stemmed from weakness, not neglect. Because the costly Brazilian adventure had bankrupted the WIC, the Amsterdam directors did not allocate any substantial military or financial resources to New Netherland that could have been used to control the Indians more effectively. Thus, when Stuyvesant asked his superiors in Amsterdam to supply him with several hundred soldiers to defend New Netherland against possible English aggression in January 1664, his request was rejected in the light of the company’s dismal financial situation.437

When they realized that active support from the Company directors was not forthcoming, Megapolensis and Drisius eventually gave up on their efforts to convert the native peoples of New Netherland. Calvinist preachers who served in New Netherland after the 1640s no longer concerned themselves with the conversion of the Indian peoples. This was particularly noteworthy in the Upper Hudson Valley, where Dutch-

437 A. Eekhof, De Hervormde Kerk in Noord-Amerika (1624-1664) (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1913), volume 1, 170-171 (letter of August 5, 1657). For an English translation of this letter, see “Letters of the Dutch Ministers to the Classis of Amsterdam, 1655-1664,” NNN, 399. In his Zegenrijk Gewest, 274, Jaap Jacobs points out that the Dutch Reformed Church was only successful in evangelizing indigenous peoples in Southeast Asia when secular Dutch authorities had brought these populations under political control. For the increasingly deteriorating financial situation of the WIC in the 1630s and 1640s, see J.G. van Dillen, Van Rijkdom en Regenten: Handboek tot de Economische en Sociale Geschiedenis van Nederland tijdens de Republiek (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), 168-169; Henk den Heijer, De Geschiedenis van de WIC (Zutphen: Walburg Press, 1994), chapter 6. For the request by Stuyvesant in 1664, see Zegenrijk Gewest, 74.
Indian relations were relatively peaceful. *Dominee* Gideon Schaets, when appointed minister of Rensselaerswijk in May 1652, received instructions to do all he could to introduce the gospel to “the heathens as well as the heathenish children.” Yet, no sources have survived to indicate that Schaets actually preached to or sent missionaries among Indians during his long tenure at the Dutch colonial communities on the Upper Hudson Valley from 1652 to 1694. It is not clear why Schaets did not follow in the footsteps of his predecessor Megapolensis, who had at least tried to attract the Mohawks to Christianity; it is possible that by mid-century, the Dutch colonists had concluded that any further attempts to bring Christian civilization to the *wilden* of New Netherland were useless.438

Once, Dutch Calvinists had hoped to convert the “blind heathens” of North America; the repeated failures of Michaelius, Bogardus, and Megapolensis had made it painfully clear to the Dutch that their Algonquian and Iroquoian neighbors rejected the “true Christian religion.” Instead of possible candidates for conversion, the Indians of New Netherland devolved into dangerous savages who could not be saved. This changing attitude was dramatically expressed by Hermannus Blom, the minister of Wiltwijck, a small Dutch town along the Hudson River midway between Fort Orange and Manhattan, from 1660 to 1667. During his tenure, Wiltwijck suffered badly in the two Esopus wars. When the Esopus Indians surprised the village in June 1663, killing no less than 24 settlers and capturing 45 others, *dominee* Blom wrote to the Classis of Amsterdam that he was confident that God would soon “avenge this blood on the heads of these murderous

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healthens.” Depicting the frontier conflict as an epic battle between good and evil, Blom also noted, “The Lord our God will again bless our arms, and grant that the Foxes who have endeavored to lay waste to the vineyard of the Lord shall be destroyed.”

By the time of the English takeover of New Netherland, Dutch Calvinist preachers had decisively turned away from the Indians. Although Megapolensis and also Bogardus had briefly served as intercultural mediators in secular affairs, all Protestant ministers eventually concluded that the cultural boundaries separating Indians from Christians were not worth crossing. For all their close interactions with Dutch colonists, the Indians remained heathens and wilden who could not be trusted and were unfit for Christianity.

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439 Eekhof, Hervormde Kerk in Noord-Amerika, 1, 234-236. For an English translation, see DRCHSNY 13, 373-374. On the 1663 frontier war, see Trelease, Indian Affairs, 160-165.

440 During the period 1689-1720, a considerable number of Mohawks embraced Protestant Christianity and was baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church in Albany. Following Dutch Reformed regulations, baptismal candidates needed sponsors who were already members of the Calvinist church. Many of the sponsors for Mohawk baptism-candidates were therefore Dutch officials and fur traders from Albany, suggesting a close bond between the two peoples. However, there were considerable limits to this relationship. The Mohawks and Dutch always remained segregated from each other in separate towns; the Mohawks only visited Albany for baptisms and trade. Moreover, the Mohawks primarily were attracted to Dutch Protestantism in order to revitalize their own communities that had become divided by French Jesuit missionaries and weakened by French and Algonquian attacks during the 1680s and 1690s. By establishing close relations with the nearby, predominately Dutch, residents of Albany, the Mohawks attempted to secure military aid from the colony of English New York. In addition, some colonial observers noted that the Mohawks only partially converted to Christianity and continued to practice their own religious traditions. Finally, by the 1720s-1730s, the Mohawks increasingly turned to Anglican missionaries in order to strengthen diplomatic ties with English colonial authorities. The number of Mohawk baptisms in the Dutch Reformed Church of Albany significantly declined after the 1720s. Although the Mohawk conversions to Dutch Protestantism in this period cemented the Mohawk alliance with the Anglo-Dutch residents of Albany, the two cultures remained separate from each other and did not truly blend. See Lois M. Feister, “Indian-Dutch Relations in the Upper Hudson Valley: A Study of Baptism Records in the Dutch Reformed Church, Albany, New York,” Man in the Northeast 24 (1982): 89-113; William Bryan Hart, “For the Good of Our Souls: Mohawk Authority, Accommodation, and Resistance to Protestant Evangelism, 1700-1780,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Brown University, 1998), 68-84; Daniel K. Richter, “‘Some of Them ... Would Always Have a Minister with Them’: Mohawk Protestantism, 1683-1719,” American Indian Quarterly XVI, no. 4 (1992): 471-484.
9. The Marginalization of People of Mixed Descent

Sexual liaisons between Dutchmen and native women were frequent and widespread in New Netherland. The willingness of Dutchmen to engage in these intimate arrangements, and to do so in a manner modeled after Indian customs, showed a considerable degree of cultural accommodation. Still, natives sometimes complained that Dutchmen did not treat their Indian female partners with respect. During a diplomatic visit of a Mohawk delegation to Fort Orange in September 1659, the Indian spokesmen demanded “that when any one of their people dies and one of the Dutch is her mate, he ought to give to the relatives of the deceased one or two suits of cloth.” Historian Matthew Dennis has correctly pointed out that it was customary in Mohawk Iroquois society to exchange condolence gifts to relatives of the deceased in order to solidify kinship ties. The failure of Dutchmen to do so indicated that they had a different view of intercultural liaisons than the Mohawks. While some Dutchmen concluded that by simply entering into intimate relations with Native Americans they obtained direct access to valuable beaver furs, foodstuffs, and wampum, the Indians viewed these liaisons as serious relationships that had to be nurtured carefully and treated with respect.441

Notably, Dutchmen were not the only ones who treated the liaisons with indifference. It is striking that none of the surviving Dutch documentary records provide examples of Dutch and Indian partners who actually jointly resided in either colonial or native communities. Instead, Dutchmen and native women remained in their own villages

441 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 454 (September 1659 diplomatic visit); Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace*, 168. See also Nan A. Rothschild, “Social Distance between Dutch Settlers and Native Americans,” in: *One Man's Trash is Another Man's Treasure*, 189-201.
and probably only (re-)established contact with each other during the trading season in the summer months. When handelstijd was finished in the early fall, both sides did apparently not see each other until the next year. If these were not marriages in Christian eyes, the entire lack of cohabitation suggests that Indians also had doubts. The failure of the liaisons to bring the colonists and Indians closer together is further revealed by the treatment of children born to Dutch-Indian couples. Some scholars have argued that the absence of many children of Dutch-Indian descent in New Netherland documents is proof of the large social distance between the two cultures. However, the frequent references by Dutch colonists and officials to intercultural sexual relations strongly suggest many such children have eluded the documentary record. The scarcity of references to Dutch-Indian individuals in Dutch sources suggests that most of these persons of mixed descent grew up in Native American communities societies rather than in colonial society. The matrilineal character of the coastal Algonquian and Iroquoian societies also supports the argument that the children of Dutch fathers and Indian mothers resided in native villages rather than Dutch towns. According to this kinship system, children were raised by the mother and the mother’s brother instead of by relatives of the father.442

In any case, since Indian-Dutch children are almost entirely absent from Dutch sources, native communities must have raised the offspring of intercultural liaisons as their own. Instead of giving these children a bilingual education that could have provided the native communities with a cadre of fluent interpreters, native women and their relatives brought the children born from Dutch fathers up as Indians rather than as

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442 For assertions that intercultural sexual relations were not widespread, see Rothschild, “Social Distance Between Dutch Settlers and Native Americans,” 189-201. For the Iroquois kinship system and the matrilineal system, see Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, 20.
people-in-between. This Indian attitude is clear from the few individuals of mixed
descent who did become known in colonial records as official intercultural mediators. For
example, when a prominent Mohawk-Dutch individual visited Fort Orange in order to
carry an official message to French Canada on behalf of the Mohawks in December 1653,
the Dutch magistrates believed that they were dealing with an Indian and not with a
person who had a Dutch father. In the letter to the French authorities the Fort Orange
court officials referred to the Mohawk-Dutch messenger as “Canaqueese, the bearer
herof, an Indian who is much beloved by the Maquas.”

Although the Dutch must have known that children of mixed descent were raised
in native communities, the colonists initially regarded them as Indians. The experiences
of the two Indian-Dutch children of Cornelis Antonisz van Slijck provided a good
example of this attitude. Van Slijck had established an extensive intimate relationship
with a Mohawk woman out of which at least two children were born during the 1640s.
When these two children had grown up they resolved to live in the nearby Dutch
communities on the Upper Hudson Valley in the 1660s. It is unknown why they both
suddenly wanted to relocate to the community of their father, but there is strong evidence
to suggest that Hilletie desired to move to the Dutch community to learn more about
Christianity. Significantly, her Mohawk relatives and even her mother scorned her for
this. In addition, when Hilletie and her brother arrived in the Dutch communities of the
Upper Hudson Valley, they were treated as Indians rather than as people of Dutch
descent. Only after they established residence in Dutch towns and adopted Protestant

443 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 78 (Canaqueese). For his biography, see
Thomas Grassmann, “Flemish Bastard (Batârd Flamard, Dutch Bastard, Jan Smits, John Smith),”
*Dictionary of Canadian Biography* I (Toronto, 1966): 407-408. I will discuss his career in the
next chapter in more detail.
Christianity and used the Dutch names of Hilletie and Jacques were the two children firmly integrated into Dutch colonial society.444

This accommodation to Dutch society was easier to accomplish for Jacques than for his sister Hilletie. In one of the colonial records Jacques is described as “formerly an Indian,” indicating that he had successfully persuaded colonists that he was like them. However, according to Jasper Danckaerts, a Dutch Reformed minister who visited Schenectady in 1680, local townsmen insulted Hilletie by calling her a “converted sow.” Danckaerts suggested that the colonists scorned Hilletie primarily because of her strong personal interest in Christian piety. He noted that Hilletie was made fun of because she “would sometimes rebuke them [colonists] a little for their evil lives, drunkenness, and foul and godless language.” But by referring to Hilletie as a “converted sow” the Schenectady residents implied that they considered her not fully their own. Hilletie’s brother never faced such discrimination, and all available evidence indicates that he was quickly accepted as a full and active member of the Schenectady community. Eventually Hilletie and Jacques made good use of their unique cultural and linguistic backgrounds by becoming valuable interpreters of the colonial government of English New York during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, Jacques and Hilletie were only able to become official mediators after they had convinced the colonists that they had fully integrated into colonial society and were no longer Indians.445

444 For the two Indian-Dutch Van Slijck children, see Burke, Mohawk Frontier, 148-149. For Hilletie, see William Bryan Hart, “For the Good of Our Souls: Mohawk Authority, Accommodation, and Resistance to Protestant Evangelism, 1700-1780,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Brown University, 1998), 76-80.

445 For the quotation of Van Slijck, see DRCHSNY, 3: 323, 431. See also Trelease, Indian Affairs, 211. For Hilletie’s ordeal, see Jasper Danckaerts, “Journal of a Voyage to New York and a Tour in Several of the American Colonies in 1679-1680,” (1680) In Mohawk Country, 196-197.
Despite the widespread use of liaisons between Dutchmen and Indian women to facilitate economic exchange, both sides did not use the intimate relations to bring the two different cultures closer together. Almost all children born of cross-cultural sexual encounters were brought up as Indians rather than as people-in-between. The absence of any Dutch protests against this native policy reveals that the Dutch were not very interested in their own children of mixed descent. Unlike the western Great Lakes region where liaisons between Frenchmen and native women led to the creation of a métis (mixed Indian-French) community during the eighteenth century, native-Dutch liaisons in New Netherland did not result in the development of a new people who blended two cultures.446

10. Conclusion

Native-Dutch interactions in mid-Atlantic North America were much more extensive and informal than were those in Brazil. In contrast to Dutch Brazil, where a small group of mediators maintained diplomatic relations with native peoples, in New Netherland many colonists closely interacted with their native neighbors in daily encounters. While Dutch-Indian relations in Brazil were shaped by the mutual needs for an alliance against the Iberian powers, in New Netherland cross-cultural interactions were

Jacques’ career can be traced at length in Burke, *Mohawk Frontier*, passim. For their careers as Indian interpreters, see Hagedorn, “’A Friend to go Between Them,’” 241 (Hilletie), 242 (Jacques mistakenly identified there as a woman).

primarily based on the economic exchange of a wide variety of commodities. In contrast to Brazil, mid-Atlantic North America was not colonized by Spain or Portugal and did not have much to offer for the Dutch besides beaver pelts. New Netherland remained on the margins of the Dutch Atlantic empire. Since there were no religious or economic incentives to migrate from the tolerant and prosperous United Provinces, New Netherland did not experience the dynamic population growth of New England. Unlike the Chesapeake Bay, the region between the Delaware and Hudson rivers was too cold to grow high-quality tobacco.

For these reasons, the New Netherland economy remained largely dependent upon a bartering system with native peoples. The Algonquian and Iroquoian peoples eagerly participated in this frontier exchange economy, since it provided them with a wide variety of attractive and valuable items such as liquor, firearms, gunpowder, pastries, metal tools, and textiles. Since the colonial population remained small and the Indians viewed the transfer of land rights differently than colonists, the native peoples often sold small portions of their land to the Dutch in order to obtain trade goods. During *handelstijd*, Native men and women visited colonial towns and often stayed overnight to peddle their foods, furs and drink liquor with colonists. In addition, in part to facilitate intercultural trade, Indian women and Dutch men established extensive intimate liaisons. Finally, because of their frequent interactions, colonists and Indians held conversations with each other about topics both sides considered important.

Despite the frontier exchange economy that brought Indians and colonists closely together, the relationship was often marred by violence and by a propensity to uphold cultural distance. The Dutch and the Indian peoples revealed this inconsistent attitude in
various ways. Greedy colonists often manhandled Indians who visited colonial communities, and Dutch employers exploited natives who sought temporary work in the colonial economy. For their part, Indians rejected Dutch attempts to convert them to Protestant Christianity. Perhaps more alarming, both sides frequently resorted to violence. Although there were large regional differences in the extent of intercultural violence, colonists and Indians throughout New Netherland often showed a remarkable unwillingness to coexist peacefully. The failure to establish some common ground between colonists and natives in New Netherland was finally demonstrated by their treatment of children of mixed descent. Neither people allowed individuals born of Dutch fathers and Indian mothers to maintain multiple identities. Those persons who used their unique cultural background to serve as interpreters were only allowed to do so if they firmly identified with only one culture. For all the close interactions brought about by the frontier exchange economy, everyday contacts between Indians and colonists in New Netherland failed to establish a stable relationship between the two cultures.
CHAPTER 6

"TO MAKE PEACE WITH THEM, BUT ONLY UPON GOOD AND SAFE CONDITIONS": INTERCULTURAL DIPLOMATS IN NEW NETHERLAND, 1635-1664

In the preceding chapter we saw that, despite frequent interactions, the relationship between Indians and colonists in New Netherland remained generally distrustful and distant. While the frontier exchange economy brought the two cultures closely together, Dutch-Indian relations were repeatedly marred by rumors of war, intercultural conflicts, and violent incidents. However, because each side needed the other in the mutually advantageous bartering system, native peoples and colonists relied on intercultural mediators to preserve the practical relationship. This chapter examines the role of Indian, Dutch, and mixed individuals who served as the official interpreters, diplomats, and negotiators between the two cultures.448

After providing a social profile of the official mediators, I will discuss the role of Dutch and Indian go-betweens in resolving several intercultural conflicts in New Netherland. The first conflict is Kieft’s War in the greater Manhattan area during the first

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447 The quotation is taken from the official instructions for the mediator Claes Jansen de Ruijter during the first Esopus War, June 3, 1660. See DRCHSNY, 13: 173.

448 I use here the term “official” mediators to indicate those colonists and Indians who were formally designated or dispatched by their own people to negotiate with other parties. For this definition, see James H. Merrell, Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier (New York: Norton, 1999), 32-34, especially note 44.
half of the 1640s. Then came the two Esopus Wars, fought between the Dutch and the Algonquian-speaking Esopus Indians (1659-1660, 1663-1664). While mediators were particularly needed to negotiate an end to the bloodshed, they were also necessary to maintain the peace between cultures, once it had been restored. Since Dutch-Mohawk relations on the Upper Hudson Valley remained largely peaceful, I analyze the role of mediators in this relationship as well.

By examining the role of mediators in both violent and peaceful contexts, I argue that the official intercultural go-betweens in New Netherland wanted to keep a cultural distance between Dutch and Indians. Although the mediators frequently crossed cultural boundaries to prevent conflicts and preserve peace, they did not really want to bring the two peoples closer together. Like ordinary colonists and Indians, almost all official mediators interacted with the other culture for practical purposes only and not out of any desire to establish a new society that blended or integrated Dutch and Indian worlds.449

1. Colonial Mediators

When hiring intercultural mediators Dutch colonial officials looked for colonists who could fulfill two particular requirements. The first requirement was to have a practical knowledge of Indian languages and diplomatic customs. Like other Indian-European frontiers in colonial North America, all official talks and diplomatic negotiations between colonists and Indians in New Netherland were held in native languages rather than in a European tongue. Because the Spanish, French, English, and

449 For an example of a region where Europeans and Indians did create a new world that (temporarily) united different cultures into a functioning relationship with mutually accepted norms, see Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
Dutch initially lacked the power to force Indian peoples to speak their languages, European colonial powers were forced to use native languages and indigenous diplomatic customs such as the use of metaphorical language, the use of symbolic kinship terms, and the exchange of presents to facilitate communication. For Dutch navigators and merchants, learning different languages and customs was a practical aspect of their quest for profits inside and outside Europe.450

Since the frontier exchange economy brought Dutch colonists in frequent contact with the Indians, many colonists were able to communicate with their native neighbors at a basic level. For example, a Mohawk-Dutch wordlist made by the barber-surgeon Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert during an expedition to the Iroquois in the early 1630s primarily consisted of words and terms that were useful for exchange such as the names of fur bearing animals, a list of trade goods, and numbers. According to most scholars, the language that Dutch colonists and Mohawks used was a trade jargon, or a very simplified version of the language that the Mohawks spoke amongst themselves. Most colonists failed to gain a deeper understanding of the actual Mohawk language, primarily because the Iroquoian language was hard to learn for Europeans. One Protestant minister who tried to make a more detailed Mohawk vocabulary during the early 1640s concluded in frustration that even Dutch colonists who had been in extensive

contact with the Mohawks for many years did only have a rudimentary understanding of that Indian language.451

Despite these linguistic problems, a small number of colonists eventually gained a more sophisticated knowledge of the various Indian languages that enabled them to serve as interpreters for Dutch authorities. In the mid-1640s, the Colonial Council appointed Cornelis Anthonisz van Slijck and Dirck Dircksen Coe as official interpreters to the Mohawks. Although it is unknown to what extent these two colonists could actually speak the Mohawk language, their formal selection as translators by the senior colonial officials suggests that Van Slijck and Coe must have been more fluent in the Mohawk language than other colonists.452

The second requirement that Dutch officials were looking for in intercultural mediators was reliability and trust. As historian Luuc Kooijmans has recently reminded us, trust was an important social value among Dutch overseas merchants. In a time when transportation was slow and linguistic communication was difficult, loyalty and reliability were highly regarded among Dutchmen who were involved in interactions with non-Dutch speaking peoples. Because the mediators were the official representatives of the colonial government in its relations with indigenous peoples, local Dutch authorities


452 E.B. O’Callaghan, ed. The Register of New Netherland, 1626-1674 (Albany: 1865), 133. For the emergence of skilled interpreters in New Netherland see also Feister, “Linguistic Communication,” 33-37. For Van Slijck, see VRBM, 809.
therefore needed individuals who could be trusted to convey delicate political messages to the Algonquian- and Iroquoian-speaking Indians.453

During the 1620s and 1630s, when New Netherland primarily consisted of several isolated fur trading posts, Company officials of all ranks acted as intercultural mediators. Because the colonial population was very small and spread out thinly over a large territory, ordinary colonists as well as senior Company executives were actively involved in maintaining good diplomatic relations with the Indian peoples. For instance, during his tenure as Director of New Netherland from 1633 to 1638, Wouter van Twiller personally received large delegations of Indian diplomats at Fort Amsterdam on Manhattan. To strengthen trade relations with the native embassies, Van Twiller provided shelter and food to these Indian envoys and their families.454

When the colonial population of New Netherland increased after the mid-1640s, middling colonists made up the largest social group of colonial go-betweens. Of all social groups in New Netherland society, this category interacted most frequently with Native Americans. Because their income was small, these farmers, small traders, artisans, Company employees, and soldiers sought regular contact with Indians in order to augment their meager earnings and to pay off debts in the colonial economy. By exchanging liquor and manufactured goods with natives in return for valuable beaver pelts and wampum, these middling colonists hoped to accumulate more wealth. Because


454 GAA, Notarial Archives 1283/114v: July 13, 1641 (declaration of Dirck Corss and Claes van Elslandt on behalf of Van Twiller) (I have used a microfilm copy of this document at the New Netherland Project, New York State Library, Albany, New York, film AFM-200-I).
participating in the frontier exchange economy was of utmost importance for them, these individuals quickly learned the Indian jargons and other native customs that were necessary for facilitating transactions with the wilden. Cornelis Anthonisz van Slijck is a good example. Van Slijck arrived in the colony of Rensselaerswijck in 1634 as a carpenter and mason. Van Slijck became closely acquainted with the nearby Mohawks who regularly visited Rensselaerswijck to exchange goods. He also established an intimate relationship with a Mohawk woman out of which at least two children were born during the 1640s. His familiarity with the Mohawks and his ability to speak their language was so impressive that colonial authorities in Manhattan appointed him as official Indian interpreter to the Mohawks in 1645. Throughout the 1650s Van Slijck continued to act as colonial mediator at several conferences and meetings.455

Like Van Slijck, Claes Jansen de Ruijter was also one of the middling colonists who became important go-betweens for the Company government. It is unknown how De Ruijter learned Indian languages, but he may have become acquainted with Native American cultures during his explorations of possible copper and crystal mines in New Netherland. It is significant that several of the Dutch mediators in Brazil were also active as mine explorers. Because the locations of these reported mineral deposits were often difficult to find, the colonial miners made extensive use of native guides. During these explorations De Ruijter probably learned Indian languages. Although he remains an elusive figure, we know that De Ruijter obtained a good knowledge of native languages because he repeatedly served as interpreter during Indian-Dutch conflicts in the 1650s

and 1660s. Both Van Slijck and De Ruijter’s careers show that ordinary colonists with limited means could become valuable go-betweens in New Netherland.\textsuperscript{456}

Colonists who had shown considerable talents for learning Indian jargons and languages or for interacting with natives were often appointed as local Company officials. They functioned as the main representatives of the WIC in relations with the native peoples. These positions were usually low- or midlevel and provided the mediators with some social status in the colonial community. For example, after his expedition to the Iroquois in 1635, the earlier mentioned barber-surgeon Van den Bogaert was promoted to the post of \textit{commies}, or chief mercantile agent, at Fort Orange in 1645. Although Van den Bogaert had previous experience as a manager of the Company stores on Manhattan, his familiarity with the Iroquois must have played an important role in his promotion to \textit{commies} at New Netherland’s major trading post. Similarly, one Sander or Alexander Boyer served as assistant to the \textit{commies} at Fort Nassau on the \textit{Zuidrivier} during the 1640s and 1650s primarily because of his skills as Indian interpreter.\textsuperscript{457}

Several colonial go-betweens successfully climbed the social ladder of New Netherland society. However, their specialized skills as interpreters or intercultural diplomats played only minor roles in their social mobility. Instead, the ascendancy of these mediators through the social ranks of the small colony came through strategic

\textsuperscript{456} For De Ruijter, see \textit{DRCHSNY}, 13: 99-100 (references to his mining activities). See also O’Callaghan, ed. \textit{Calendar of Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State, Albany, New York. Volume 1: Dutch Manuscripts, 1630-1664} (1865) (Reprint: Gregg Press, Ridgewood, 1968), 12, 33, 42, 44, 47, 55, 58, 72, 97, 154, 207, 212, 225, 292, 374. For miners as mediators in Brazil, see chapter 4 of this dissertation.

marriages with daughters of prominent colonists, displays of dedication and loyalty to one’s superiors, and the accumulation of wealth and property. Govert Loockermans (1615-after 1670) provides a good example. Loockermans arrived as a cook’s mate in New Netherland in the early 1630s. He quickly worked his way up the social ladder as a clerk to director-general Wouter van Twiller in the 1630s. In 1641 he went back to the United Provinces, where he married a woman who was closely related to the prominent Amsterdam merchant house of the Verbrugge family. Through this marriage, Loockermans was appointed as the main agent of the Verbrugge mercantile operation in New Netherland. In this position Loockermans came in frequent contact with native peoples in order to collect animal furs. His rise to social prominence in New Netherland was reflected in his appointment as one of the schepenen or magistrates of New Amsterdam in 1657. At the same time, Loockermans was appointed as one of the Indian interpreters in 1658. During the 1660s Loockermans continued to fulfill his dual roles as intercultural diplomat and prominent colonist.458

What is significant about the careers of social climbers like Loockermans is that they continued to use their expertise as interpreters and diplomats after they had risen through the ranks of colonial society. As the career of Loockermans demonstrates, the colonial elites in seventeenth-century New Netherland closely associated with Indians because they needed them as important trading partners. Since the colonial economy remained heavily dependent upon the natives for the supplying of foodstuffs, sewant, and furs, Dutch colonists from all social ranks established close relations with the Indians.

Although Loockermans was a social upstart and only later in life became a member of the colonial elite, many individuals from traditionally prominent social and economic backgrounds were also to be found among the colonial negotiators in New Netherland. Arguably the most well known example of this category is Arent van Curler (1620-1667). His parents were members of the social and political elite in the rural province of Gelderland and were closely related to the prominent WIC director Kiliaen van Rensselaer. Like many other sons of Dutch elites in the seventeenth century, Van Curler wanted to gain experience in the world of overseas commerce. By using his family connections to his great uncle Van Rensselaer, Van Curler became a junior official in the colony of Rensselaerswijck in 1637. Van Rensselaer had been skeptical of Van Curler’s accounting duties and warned about the younger man’s willingness to associate closely with the Indians. Despite these protestations, Van Curler quickly established important trade relations with the nearby Mohawks. In the meantime, Van Curler rose to prominence in the colony by becoming a member of the court of Rensselaerswijck. This court closely cooperated with the court of Fort Orange, the nearby WIC fort, in managing Dutch policies toward the Mohawks. Van Curler’s expertise in intercultural diplomacy was so valuable that the English governor Richard Nicolls employed him as an official go-between to the Iroquois and New France after the English conquest of New Netherland in 1664.459

Other members of the colonial elite who became important intercultural mediators were the university educated Adriaen van der Donck, the experienced cosmopolitan

trader David Pietersz de Vries, the Rensselaerswijck director Brant Aertsz van
Slichtenhorst, and the beer-brewer Pieter Wolphertsz van Couwenhoven. Sometimes the
sons or relatives of influential colonial officials emerged as go-betweens as well. For
example, Peter or Pieter Alrichs, an intercultural mediator at the Delaware River Valley
during the late 1650s and early 1660s, was a nephew of director-general Jacob Alrichs of
the Delaware River Valley district. The son of Aertsz van Slichtenhorst became a
valuable negotiator between the colonists and Indians at the Upper Hudson Valley during
the 1660s and 1670s. The presence of these prominent colonists among the ranks of the
intercultural mediators clearly shows that the colonial elites in New Netherland did not
object to close interaction with Native Americans. The willingness of prominent Dutch
colonists to associate closely with native peoples was not unusual for European elites. As
several historians have pointed out, a considerable number of British and French
noblemen functioned as influential intercultural mediators among Native Americans in
colonial North America.460

460 For Van der Donck, see Ada van Gastel, “Adriaen van der Donck in Rensselaerswijck:
1641-1643,” DHM, LX, no. 3 (1987): 14-19; on David de Vries, see NNN, 183-185; for Brant van
Slichtenhorst, see Janny Venema, “The Court Case of Brant Aertsz van Slichtenhorst against Jan
van Rensselaer,” DHM, LXXV, No. 1 (2001): 3-8. On Van Couwenhoven, see Zegenrijk Gewest,
160, 213, 298, 483; Susan Elisabeth Shaw, “Building New Netherland: Gender and Family in a
Weslager, Dutch Explorers, Traders, and Settlers, 77, 78, 240, 246, 250, 289, 297n. On the son of
Brant van Slichtenhorst, see Nancy L. Hagedorn, “‘A Friend to go between them’: Interpreters
For examples of British and French elites as intercultural mediators, see for instance Timothy J.
Shannon, “Dressing for Success on the Mohawk Frontier: Hendrick, William Johnson, and the
Indian Fashion,” WMQ, LII, no. 1 (January 1996): 13-42; Peter Cook, “New France’s Agents of
Proceedings of the Twentieth Annual Meeting of the French Colonial Historical Society,
of these prominent colonists among the ranks of cultural mediators contradicts James H. Merrell’s
assertion in Into the American Woods, 65, that “no gentleman got too close to Indians.”
The New Netherland elite was also well represented among the mediators because the Dutch colonial authorities wanted to keep social order in the colony. The Company government was constantly afraid that the close encounters between Indians and colonists would get out of hand and result in disturbances of the hierarchical social order, so local magistrates were often instructed to maintain the peace between Indians and colonists. In this context it was not so important to have expert Indian language skills, as it was to have credentials as an appointed public official. For example, Van der Donck, Van Slichtenhorst, and Van Couwenhoven all held public functions as local officials when the Company government called upon them to act as intercultural diplomats. By using these prominent colonists as go-betweens the WIC demonstrated that it considered Indian affairs to be a matter of public order.461

Protestant ministers also served occasionally as intercultural mediators. Although the Calvinist preachers were unsuccessful in converting the Algonquians and Iroquoians, their frequent interactions with native peoples had given them the necessary skills. In addition, Calvinist preachers had generally a prominent status in Dutch society during the first half of the seventeenth-century. Because they were closely associated with the secular government, Dutch ministers were therefore sometimes hired as go-betweens by the Company authorities. In March 1642, minister Everardus Bogardus functioned as one of the Dutch negotiators in talks with the Algonquians. During his tenure as minister at Rensselaerswijck during the 1640s, Johannes Megapolensis on several occasions served as mediator between colonial officials and Mahicans. In addition, after his relocation to

New Amsterdam, Megapolensis was called upon by Director-General Petrus Stuyvesant to act as one of the interpreters and mediators in a special conference with several “chiefs of the savages dwelling about the Manhatans” in 1649. However, after 1650, ministers were not again called upon to serve as go-betweens. By that time it had become clear to Dutch Reformed preachers that the conversion of Indians had failed.462

Since women also actively participated in the frontier exchange economy, it would be logical to find women among the colonial go-betweens in New Netherland as well. However, throughout the history of New Netherland there are only two examples of colonial women who functioned as official diplomats. These were Trientje Evertsen and Sara Kierstede/van Borsum. The Company government may have hired Trientje Evertsen and Sara Kierstede/van Borsum as official interpreters in 1663 and 1664 because they had expert language skills that set them apart from other colonists. While not much is known about Trientje Evertsen, Sara Kierstede/van Borsum probably became acquainted

with both the Mohawk Iroquoian and the Mahican Algonquian languages at a very young age when she lived at Rensselaerswijck with her parents in the early 1630s. Like most young children who are exposed to a wholly new language, Sara Kierstede probably picked up the fundamentals of these two complex Indian tongues relatively easily. With a working knowledge of the Algonquian Mahican language Sara Kierstede was able to learn several coastal Algonquian dialects after she relocated to New Amsterdam in the late 1630s. Because of her expertise in these local Algonquian tongues, Sara Kierstede was hired as an Indian interpreter by the WIC in 1663 and 1664.463

There are several reasons why Sara Kierstede remained one of the very few documented female intercultural mediators in New Netherland. To begin with, women were a minority in New Netherland until the mid-1640s. Although exact demographic numbers are elusive, most scholars agree that women and families only started to arrive in considerable numbers after the cessation of the devastating Dutch-Algonquian wars in 1645. Before that time, New Netherland consisted primarily of several fortified trading posts in which sailors, soldiers, traders, and Company employees made up the population. Only New Amsterdam and Rensselaerswijck resembled family-oriented communities,

463 Frijhoff, *Wegen van Evert Willemsz*, 627, suggests that Sara Kierstede learned Indian languages as a young child at Rensselaerswijck. Sara’s parents were poor Scandinavians who had resettled in Amsterdam in the hope of a better economic future. Sara’s mother Anneke Jansz married dominee Evert Willemsz Bogardus after her first husband died in the late 1630s. Together with other strategic marriages of her children, Anneke’s marriage catapulted Sara and her relatives into the social elite of New Netherland. Sara Kierstede later remarried with Cornelis van Borsum. For her family history see Frijhoff, *Wegen van Evert Willemsz*, 883-884. See also Shaw, “Building New Netherland,” 308-312. For Evertsen, see DRCHSNY, 13: 321. European colonial officials knew that young children learned Indian languages faster than adults. For instance, French officials in Louisiana specifically sent young French boys to live among Indians in order to learn native languages. See Patricia Galloway, “Talking with Indians: Interpreters and Diplomacy in French Louisiana,” in: Winthrop D. Jordan and Sheila L. Skemp, eds. *Race and Family in the Colonial South* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1989): 109-129. For the argument that young children easily learned new languages I have used both Sara’s and Trientje’s surnames here to avoid confusion with male mediators.
and even these did not contain many women until the 1650s. During the period 1624-1645 there were therefore only a small number of Dutch women permanently present in the colony who could actually interact closely with Native Americans.464

Since the population of New Netherland before 1645 was mostly made up of men, almost all intercultural negotiators hired by the WIC were men as well. Sara Kierstede’s career as interpreter fitted into this pattern because she was one of the very few European women in New Netherland during the 1630s and early 1640s. By the time Dutch and other European women migrated to the colony in large numbers, the pattern had been established, Sara Kierstede notwithstanding. Colonial authorities also did not employ many female negotiators because the Dutch considered diplomacy to be an exclusively male activity. With the exception of women who were associated with the nobility or royalty, early modern European women were not able to participate in politics, diplomacy, and warfare. Since the Company government in New Netherland closely resembled the hierarchical and male-dominated political system in the United Provinces, colonial women were excluded from politics and diplomacy as well. The shortage of European women in pre-1645 New Netherland and the exclusion of women from diplomacy thus accounted for the absence of female mediators. Stuyvesant and the Colonial Council probably made an exception for Sara Kierstede because of her exceptional fluency in native languages and because of her status as a prominent

2. Native Mediators

Like colonial women, Native American women were largely absent from the ranks of intercultural mediators in mid-Atlantic North America. Although native women played important roles in the household and often had an influential role in internal community politics, foreign relations and diplomacy were off-limits for women. Even when Indian women do appear in official treaties or council meetings, they primarily do so as signers of treaties or sales rather than as actual negotiators or interpreters. In the large number of land transactions between Dutch colonial officials and Mahicans on the Upper Hudson Valley, Mahican women often signed the land-sales. Because the Algonquian-speaking Mahicans were a matrilineal society in which land-rights were transmitted through the female family line, Mahican women often oversaw the ceding of lands to colonial authorities. However, because the transaction involved diplomatic negotiations, Mahican men were always present as negotiators or as political leaders.\footnote{Dunn, Mohicans, 248-251. For the presence of women at land sales, see Dunn, Mohicans, Appendix A. For a useful overview of Algonquian women in the colonial period, see Robert S. Grumet, “Sunksquaws, Shamans, and Tradeswomen: Middle Atlantic Coastal Algonkian Women During the 17th and 18th Centuries,” in: Mona Etienne and Eleanor Burke Leacock, eds. Women and Colonization: Anthropological Perspectives (New York: Praeger Scientific, 1980): 43-62. For Iroquois women, see Natalie Zemon Davis, “Iroquois Women, European Women,” in: Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker, eds. Women, “Race,” and Writing in the Early Modern Period (New York: Routledge, 1994): 243-258.}

The only other way in which native women were present at meetings with Dutch colonial officials was as members of native delegations. According to Daniel Richter,

intercultural “conferences attracted dozens if not hundreds of men, women, and children.” He offers several explanations for this extensive participation. First, by attending the meeting with the colonial officials, the Indian delegation “gave visible evidence [to the colonists] that their spokesmen had broad political support.” In addition, by being present at a treaty, the Indian families would be able to witness that a cross-cultural truce or peace was actually made. Finally, the natives “needed to see that the relationship [with the colonists] brought them concrete benefits” in the form of gifts. The tendency of native women and children to accompany their relatives at treaty talks was especially evident at the Dutch communities on the Upper Hudson Valley. During the 1640s, the Rensselaerswijck director Van Slichtenhorst frequently received Indian delegations who came to visit him for official business. For instance, in August 1648, Van Slichtenhorst described how “18 prominent Maquas [Mohawks] and delegates, plus several women and children, arrived at the Patroonshouse with a gift.”467

Despite the presence of women among these official envoys, only Indian men functioned as actual negotiators with Dutch colonial officials. Since all the surviving sources dealing with Indian-Dutch relations were written by the Dutch, it is often very difficult to identify the native individuals who functioned as Indian negotiators at treaties or official talks. However, the university educated Adriaen van der Donck documented several interesting aspects of Indian diplomacy in his Description of New Netherland. Although Van der Donck never specified whether he was writing about the Mohawks, the Mahicans, or the smaller Algonquian communities, his observations were based on actual

interactions with native peoples during the 1640s. According to Van der Donck, Native American nations who made official treaties would not break them unless they felt that they have been unjustly dealt with. The Rensselaerswijck official also recognized the importance of gifts in native diplomacy. Van der Donck accurately pointed out that “All their alliances, agreements, peace-negotiations, reconciliations, proposals, requests, contracts, and promises are sealed with gifts or offerings. Without these [gifts] they are not to be believed, but those who adhere or follow this [gift giving] are treated in a serious manner.”

The Algonquian and Iroquoian peoples of mid-Atlantic North America used two types of mediators in their relations with the Dutch. The first type was that of the traditional spokesmen or orator. In Native American societies, oral skills were as important as written documents and testimonies were in early modern European societies. According to ethnologist William N. Fenton, “speakers were chosen for their ability to grasp principle and fact, for rhetorical gifts, and for retentive memory in a society in

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which most men and women were walking archives.” Van der Donck also noticed the significance of oratory among the Indians of New Netherland. In his *Description of New Netherland*, he observed “if something has been agreed upon among them, all the common people are assembled in the “Chief’s House”, or there were the Council has been made.” Once all the people are assembled, “one person (who has been blessed with eloquence, and also has a commanding voice) is ordered to speak.” This individual “relates at length, in an oration, everything that has been resolved.”

Some of these spokesmen were fluent in one or more native languages. In 1645, Rensselaerswijck officials dispatched “a certain Indian named Agheroense” to negotiate and interpret at peace talks between the Dutch and Algonquians at Manhattan. Agheroense was sent down to New Amsterdam principally because he spoke “all the main languages of the Indians or *wilden* that were used by the [participating] parties.” Moreover, the Rensselaerswijck officials trusted Agheroense because he was “used to live among the Christians.” A few Indian spokesmen even learned Dutch. In the spring of 1660, an Algonquian man named “Waeringh, an Indian understanding and speaking the Dutch and Indian languages” served as interpreter at two important treaties between the Dutch and several Algonquian peoples.

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Those individuals with special skills as orators were usually selected as ambassadors of their community in relations with foreigners. In addition, they were also chosen for their ability to use wampum belts as mnemonic devices in diplomatic relations. Many scholars have described the various uses of the strings of woven shell-beads in intercultural diplomacy. Perhaps the most important diplomatic function of wampum belts was that they contained a specific political message that had to be delivered to the other party in a meeting. One anthropologist has argued that “wampum may appropriately be called a channel device: it is seen as an instrument for conveying messages from a sender to a receiver.” Spokesmen were therefore not only skillful public speakers but also experts in the use of wampum as diplomatic mediums.471

These spokesmen were not necessarily chiefs or political leaders, but they had a special status as public speakers that set them apart from other kinsmen in their community. According to Van der Donck, “State envoys may go everywhere, and are also received with ceremonies and usually are provided with gifts for their ordinary [kinsmen] and Prince. If they are harmed or are being mistreated it is a matter of serious concern that will be avenged firmly. If the envoys are not friendly, they will encounter somberness, and if one does not want to deal with them, one does not accept their gifts - which they always provide – from which they will conclude that it is better to leave as quickly as possible.”472


472 Van der Donck, Beschrijvinge, 74.
The second type of Indian intercultural mediators was that of civil chiefs or headmen. The Dutch generally used the Algonquian term “sachems” to describe these native leaders. In both Algonquian and Iroquoian societies the civil chiefs were responsible for foreign relations and diplomacy. Their position was different from other political offices among the Indian peoples. During times of conflicts, both the Algonquians and Iroquoians relied on special war chiefs who had distinguished themselves in some ways on the battlefield. However, when peace was made with the enemy, the civil chiefs led the negotiations. In addition, since both the Algonquian and Iroquoian societies were matrilineal, the matrons of extended families and clan lineages were able to exercise some influence on political decision-making. The political influence of the civil chiefs was also limited because the Indian societies were not centralized. Algonquian and Iroquoian villages often had multiple civil chiefs who each represented only one segment of the community.473

Among several Indian nations more influential leaders sometimes superseded the civil chiefs in political influence. For instance, the Algonquian-speaking Mahicans of the Upper Hudson Valley had the office of chief sachem to coordinate foreign relations. Although the actual political influence of these chief sachems was limited, their position allowed them to act as diplomatic representatives for their entire people. Dutch colonial officials liked to work with this system because, like other Europeans, the Dutch were accustomed to practicing diplomacy with envoys who represented not a faction, but their

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entire nation or political entity. The Mahican chief sachem Skiwias is a good example of this type of mediator. Because of his loyalty to the Dutch, Skiwias, or “Aepjen” (“the little ape”) as the Dutch called him, colonial officials often referred to him as “chief of the Mahikanders.” By working as a dedicated intercultural mediator, Skiwias was able to obtain much prestige and diplomatic influence during the 1640s and 1660s.474

In their interactions with the Iroquois peoples, the Dutch often had to deal with special chiefs who represented the entire League of Five Nations. These chiefs represented the “Great League of Peace and Power” that ceremonially united the Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas, and Mohawks. In their diplomatic relations with outsiders, the Five Nations Iroquois employed special League Sachems who were usually different from the ordinary civil chiefs. Although the Dutch were unable to distinguish between these types of leaders, from the documentary context it is often clear that the Iroquois delegates in question represented the entire Five Nations rather than only a specific Mohawk or Oneida village. For example, in August 1654, Fort Orange court magistrates received an Iroquois delegation, consisting of “both Maquas [Mohawks] and Sinneken,” who “according to ancient custom, made a present to the court.” Since the Dutch referred to the rest of the Five Nations as “Sinneken” or Senecas, it is clear that the court officials had entertained envoys who represented the entire Five Nations. As these examples all illustrate, the Algonquians and Iroquoians made use of a wide variety of negotiators.475


3. Dutch-Indian Mediators

Individuals of Indian-Dutch descent formed a final group of intercultural mediators. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Dutch records reveal only three mixed individuals, even though intimate liaisons between Indian women and Dutch men appear to have been common. These three used their unique background to act as go-betweens between natives and colonists. All were born of Dutch fathers and Mohawk women and rose to prominence only in the final years of Dutch colonial rule. Since the surviving Dutch sources do not indicate that any individuals of mixed descent served as negotiators before the 1650s, the three Mohawk-Dutch go-betweens must have been born sometime during the 1630s and 1640s.

The Mohawk-Dutch mediator Canaquese appears in the European records only during the 1650s. Reflecting his bi-cultural background, he had different names among different groups. While the Mohawks referred to him as Canaquese, the French derogatorily named him “the Flemish Bastard.” The Dutch sometimes used the Mohawk name Canaquese as well, but on most occasions they used the Dutch name, Smits Jan. When Canaquese served as negotiator for the English colonial government after 1664, his Dutch name was anglicized as “Smiths John.” Canaquese successfully combined his linguistic skills and leadership qualities to emerge as a prominent Mohawk leader and mediator during the 1650s and 1660s.\textsuperscript{476}


\textsuperscript{476} Thomas Grassmann, “Flemish Bastard (Batard Flamand, Dutch Bastard, Jan Smits, Smiths John),” \textit{Dictionary of Canadian Biography: Volume 1, 1000 to 1700} (Toronto: University Press, 1987): 408
While both Indians and Europeans considered Canaquese a Mohawk, the other two bi-cultural go-betweens identified with the colonial world. These two individuals were the children of Cornelis Anthonisz van Slijck and a Mohawk woman. Jacques and Hilletie van Slijck became valuable mediators for the English colonial government of New York during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Because the Mohawks had difficulties with the pronunciation of European names, they usually referred to Jacques as “Acques” or “Aukes.” Since Hilletie and Jacques did not serve as mediators until after the English conquest of New Netherland, I will not discuss their careers here further.477

4. Kieft’s War, 1640-1645

Indian and Dutch mediators played an important role in Kieft’s War. Shortly after the outbreak of Dutch-Algonquian hostilities in the Manhattan area in 1640, both the Algonquians and the Dutch realized the need for skilful go-betweens to prevent hostilities from spiraling out of control. But violent incidents and cultural misunderstandings between native leaders and colonial officials continually undermined peace efforts. Sometime in the summer or fall of 1642 a drunken Hackensack Indian murdered an unnamed Dutch colonist who was thatching the roof of his farm in what is now Newark Bay. This killing threatened to explode a recently established truce between Wecquasgeeks and colonial officials in March 1642. Several Hackensack civil chiefs,

rightly fearing a violent Dutch response, carefully planned a visit to Fort Amsterdam to formally apologize for the murder.478

Because they did not dare to visit the fort without a Dutch mediator, the chiefs asked David Pietersz de Vries, a cosmopolitan trader and director of the patroonship on Staten Island, to accompany them. De Vries, who had widely traveled in the Mediterranean, South America, and Southeast Asia, recognized that colonial activities in New Netherland could only thrive if intercultural relations remained stable. He agreed to serve as negotiator, and he accompanied the Hackensack mediators to Fort Amsterdam where they met with director-general Kieft. Despite good intentions, the talks soon broke down over different expectations of justice. While the Hackensack chiefs offered a large amount of wampum to the widow of the slain colonist in order “to reconcile the parties”, Kieft demanded “the savage who had done the act [of the murder] to be brought to him.” When it was clear that no agreement could be reached, the Indian mediators became afraid that “the governor would detain them.” To avoid this, the Hackensacks told Kieft that “they would do their best to get the savage, and bring him to the fort.” However, as they departed Fort Amsterdam, the native go-betweens told De Vries “that they could not deliver up the savage to him [Kieft] as he was a sackemaker’s son – that is to say, a chief’s son.”479

Because of these failed negotiations, hostilities intensified in southern New Netherland, and they culminated in the bloody massacres of the Wecquasgeeks by the


Dutch in February 1643. The war now quickly spread to other parts of southern New Netherland, including Long Island. After the colonists killed non-combatants and plundered large amounts of corn at Indian villages, several Long Island Algonquian civil chiefs took the initiative to make a peace. When three native emissaries arrived at Fort Amsterdam in March 1643, Kieft dispatched De Vries and one Jacob Olfertsz as negotiators to the Indians. The three envoys took De Vries and Olfertsz to their main civil chief, who had relocated his people in a secluded area on the coast.480

After the group arrived at the refugee village, the Algonquians welcomed them with native diplomatic practices. To emphasize peaceful intentions, De Vries and Olfertsz were given food and a place to sleep. The next day the two Dutchmen were led to a specially constructed council-place “into the woods about four hundred paces from the houses,” where no less than sixteen Algonquian civil chiefs from Long Island met them. A special spokesman began the talks “in Indian” and used a “small bundle of sticks” as a rhetorical and mnemonic device. During his speech the unnamed orator spoke in metaphorical language to idealize Dutch-Algonquian relations. In doing so, the spokesman intended to persuade the two Dutch diplomats that the Algonquians were truly interested in peace with the colonists. However, De Vries grew tired of all the rituals and wanted to get the Indians to come to the point. He interrupted the ceremonial speech and simply acknowledged that Algonquian-Dutch relations had deteriorated. Instead of continuing the seemingly fruitless ceremonies, De Vries invited the Algonquian chiefs to come to Fort Amsterdam “where the Governor would give them presents for a peace.”481

480 NNN, 229-230.

481 NNN, 230-231. On the Indian usage of metaphorical speech and idealized language during diplomatic meetings, see Richter, Facing East from Indian Country, 129-149. For an
Although the Indian councilors must have been insulted by De Vries’ interruption, they accepted his proposal to meet with Kieft. They were anxious to stop the devastating Dutch raids against their people and their food resources. At the same time however, the Indian chiefs were afraid to go to Fort Amsterdam, lest Kieft take them as prisoners. Eventually De Vries and Olfertsz persuaded many chiefs to accompany them in a large canoe to Manhattan. At Fort Amsterdam the two sides quickly made peace and Kieft provided the Algonquian leaders with “some presents.” After the Long Island native leaders had made peace, other Algonquian chiefs soon followed. They also received gifts from the Dutch at Fort Amsterdam.482

However, Kieft’s peace rested on an inadequate foundation; he provided too few gifts. For Native Americans, gift giving was an intrinsic part of intercultural diplomacy and domestic politics. The generous exchange of gifts signified good intentions and solidified peaceful relations. In addition, by distributing European presents among kinsmen, civil chiefs were able to exercise influence over their people. If they did not receive enough gifts from colonial authorities for distribution, civil chiefs could not persuade warriors from refraining their attacks against colonists. But for Kieft and other Dutch colonial officials, gift giving was only a small aspect of diplomacy. Like other early modern Europeans, Dutch officials considered the signing of written treaties much more important than the distribution of a large number of gifts. Kieft, moreover,

overview of words and concepts used by the Iroquois in metaphorical speeches, see the “Glossary of Figures of Speech in Iroquois Political Rhetoric,” History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy, 115-124.

482 NNN, 231-232.
distrusted the Indians, something the Algonquian leaders understood; they felt insulted by Kieft’s lack of generosity.483

Because of their different attitudes toward gift giving, the brokered peace quickly collapsed. In the summer of 1643, new hostilities broke out, and Kieft resolved to exterminate the Algonquian enemies by hiring the Puritan military officer John Underhill, the architect of the devastating attack on the main Pequot village in New England in 1637. With the support of Underhill and English soldiers, the Dutch now focused all their military efforts on the destruction of native villages and agricultural fields. The loosely united Algonquian peoples struck back by targeting isolated colonial farms. After Indians destroyed his farm-compound on Staten Island, De Vries grew so disillusioned with the war that he permanently abandoned New Netherland in October, 1643. De Vries primarily blamed Kieft for causing the collapse of peaceful intercultural relations. When he took leave of Kieft at Fort Amsterdam, De Vries “told him that this murder which he had committed on so much innocent blood would yet be avenged upon him.” At the same time, De Vries’ departure demonstrated that even mediators who were sincerely committed to preventing bloodshed between the two cultures did not believe that Algonquians and Dutch could peacefully coexist.484


484 Haefeli, “Kieft’s War,” 34-35; NNN, 234 (quotation). In mid-October 1643, De Vries initially set sail to the Delaware Valley where he briefly visited the Dutch and Swedish colonies. After a weeklong stay he sailed to Virginia where he remained through the winter. In April 1644, he finally returned to the Republic. When he arrived safely in the United Provinces in June 1644, he proclaimed to be thankful to be back in his “Fatherland”, “through so many perils of savage heathens.” See NNN, 234, note 2.
In the meantime, the combined Anglo-Dutch attacks on native villages and agricultural supplies soon forced a number of Algonquian civil chiefs to appeal for peace. In April 1644 several native leaders concluded a truce with Kieft at Fort Amsterdam and promised “now and forever to refrain from doing harm to either people, cattle, houses, or anything else within the territory of New Netherland.” Despite the destructive Anglo-Dutch methods, a small number of Algonquian peoples continued their guerilla raids against outlying isolated European farms throughout the winter of 1644-1645.485

It was only through the use of Mahican and Mohawk mediators that Kieft’s War was finally brought to a close. Colonial officials had known for some time that the loosely allied Algonquian peoples of the Manhattan area had often been in conflict with the Mahicans and Mohawks. The Company government therefore instructed authorities at Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck to persuade the Mahicans and Mohawks to put pressure on the Algonquian peoples who continued to fight against the Dutch. In his “Description of New Netherland”, Van der Donck relates, how in 1645, Rensselaerswijck officials negotiated with “the Maquas wilden, being then and being still the strongest and most fearsome Nation of the Land,” about how to bring an end to “the arisen unrest and Wars between the Director Willem Kieft on the one side and the Wilde Nation from thereabouts [Manhattan] on the other side.” The Rensselaerswijck authorities eventually dispatched the multilingual Agheroense and several other unnamed Mohawks as negotiators to Manhattan. Because Agheroense and the other Mohawk mediators were not fully fluent in the Dutch language, Rensselaerswijck authorities sent Cornelis van Slijck with them as Mohawk-Dutch interpreter. In addition to the Mohawk mediators, the

Mahican civil chief Skiwias (or Aepjen) also traveled to Manhattan as negotiator. It is not clear how independent Skiwias was of Mohawk authority. Since the Mohawks had effectively defeated the Mahicans in the late 1620s, the Mohawks probably pressured the Mahicans to provide a mediator for the peace talks at Manhattan. Since the Mahicans were an Algonquian-speaking people, like the natives in southern New Netherland, the presence of Skiwias at the peace talks made intercultural communication somewhat easier.486

The Mohawk mediators and Skiwias eventually persuaded the remaining Algonquian peoples to establish peace with the Dutch at Fort Amsterdam. Unfortunately, there are no sources documenting the activities of the Mohawk go-betweens and Skiwias. Most likely they used wampum belts as rhetorical tools when they urged the Algonquians to cease fighting. By acting as negotiators on behalf of the Dutch the Mohawk and Mahican mediators were probably able to obtain valuable trade goods for themselves and their families. Moreover, their intervention in the conflict between the Dutch and Algonquians provided the Mohawks with an opportunity to establish more political control over the loosely allied Algonquian peoples of southern New Netherland. In the eighteenth century, the Iroquois would adopt a similar policy of dominating neighboring native peoples in order to expand their political influence in mid-Atlantic North America.487

486 Van der Donck, Beschrijvinge, 28-29 (Agheroense); DRCHSNY, 13: 18 (presence of Van Slijck, unnamed Mohawk mediators, and Skiwias (Aepjen)). Dunn, Mohicans and Their Land, 169-170, argues that Skiwias was forced upon the Algonquians by the Mohawks.

487 Dunn, Mohicans and Their Land, 169, speculates that Skiwias was materially compensated for his role as mediator. For the Iroquois policy in the eighteenth century, see Francis Jennings, The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian
The Mohawk and Mahican mediators were soon successful in their efforts, and on August 30, 1645, the civil chiefs of the Algonquian peoples concluded a treaty of peace with Kieft and the Colonial Council at Fort Amsterdam. However, the treaty terms demonstrated that intercultural relations remained tense; the formal agreement was not so much a peace as a truce. While the Algonquians promised not to “come armed upon the Island of Manhatans to the houses of the Christians, we [the Dutch] will neither come with guns to them except in company of a savage, who may warn them.” For all the talk about “a firm, inviolable peace,” each side remained deeply suspicious of the other. Moreover, the intervention by Mohawk and Mahican mediators demonstrated the failure of the Algonquian and Dutch go-betweens to negotiate a peaceful end to Kieft’s War.488

5. The First Esopus War, 1659-1660

Hostilities between the Algonquian-speaking Esopus Indians and colonists broke out in the fall of 1659 for several reasons. First, the Indians felt increasingly threatened by the encroaching colonists. Because colonial farmers considered the Esopus region along the west bank of the Middle Hudson Valley to be fertile agricultural land, they established widely scattered farms throughout the area during the mid-1650s. These isolated settlements endangered the agricultural fields and hunting lands of the Esopus Indians. European cattle and pigs frequently despoiled agricultural fields of the natives and Indians considered stray livestock wild game. Colonists also bartered cheap and widely available liquor to the Esopus in return for animal furs. Because the

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*DrCHSNY, 13: 18* (peace treaty); Haefeli, “Kieft’s War,” 35.

In May 1658 Stuyvesant visited the Esopus region to prevent Esopus-Dutch relations from deteriorating. Although the director-general personally led the talks with the Esopus Indians, he relied on several mediators and interpreters. In addition to using the linguistic skills of the two Esopus colonists, Thomas Chambers and Jacob Jansen Stoll, Stuyvesant employed the services of Govert Loockermans. The latter individual had extensive experience as an intercultural trader throughout New Netherland. Stuyvesant clearly trusted him, having recently appointed Loockermans to the position of New Amsterdam magistrate. Despite the expertise of these colonial go-betweens, Stuyvesant failed to reach a satisfactory agreement with the Esopus Indians. The director-general openly threatened native leaders with Dutch attacks on their towns in which elders, women, and children would not be spared. This threat violated Indian diplomatic protocol; confrontations and arguments were usually avoided to ensure that a consensus could be reached.\footnote{\textit{DRCHSNY}, 13: 81-87 (journal of Stuyvesant’s expedition to Esopus region). On Loockermans, see Riker, “Govert Loockermans.” On the importance of avoiding conflict in Indian conferences and councils, see Richter, \textit{Facing East}, 137; Fenton, “Structure, Continuity, and Change.”}

In another blunder, Stuyvesant provided too few gifts. While the Esopus civil chiefs offered a small wampum belt to Stuyvesant with which they signified to “put away
now all malice and evil intentions and would not do harm to anybody hereafter,” the
director-general only presented the Esopus leaders with “a present of two coats and two
pieces of duffel, together about four yards.” The Indians expected much more, and took
these meager presents as an insult. Without a better supply of trade goods, the native
leaders could not persuade their kinsmen that the Dutch were seriously interested in
preventing conflict.491

Moreover, none of Stuyvesant’s intercultural mediators tried to prevent these
diplomatic affronts. On the contrary, they all supported the director-general’s view that
the Esopus Indians should be dealt with harshly. Although not much is known about
Stoll, Loockermans’ relations with natives were often far from amicable. During one of
the first skirmishes of Kieft’s War in the spring of 1640, Loockermans had brutally
tortured the brother of an Algonquian sachem. Three years later, he had been personally
involved in the notorious massacre of forty Algonquian men and women at Corlaer’s
Hook. In the fall of 1647, he was suspected of having killed an Algonquian leader at the
Zuidrivier [Delaware River] during a trade expedition. Loockermans even looked down
upon Dutch boslopers who traveled into the woods to trade with Indians. In a 1648 letter
to his Amsterdam-based employer, Loockermans complained that these colonists make
themselves “slaves of the wilden, which is against nature.”492

491 DRCHSNY, 13: 85. On the significance of gifts, see note 19.

492 VRBM, 835 (info on Chambers); Frijhoff, Wegen van Evert Willemsz, 717 (torture of
Algonquian man), 724 (1643 massacre); Riker, “Govert Loockermans,” 6 (suspicion of
murdering Indian leader); Letter from Loockermans to Gillis Verbrugge, May 27, 1648, New
York Historical Society, New York City, Stuyvesant-Rutherford Papers, Folder 3: 1648 (I have
used a microfilm copy (# 7923) at the Amsterdam City Archive for this source). See also Frijhoff, 
Wegen van Evert Willemsz., 785.
Chambers was only slightly less disdainful. During his stay at Rensselaerswijck, unidentified Indians killed some of his cattle in 1648-1649. Such actions usually indicated a warning against a colonist who had mistreated the Indians. In addition, once he had relocated to the Esopus region, Chambers continuously supplied the Esopus natives with liquor, without thinking of the consequences this might have on intercultural relations. Furthermore, Chambers viewed the Esopus area as a “splendid country” which “could feed the whole of New Netherland.” In Chambers’ view, the Esopus Indians had no future, except as a cheap labor force.\footnote{493}

Because Stuyvesant’s diplomatic visit had insulted the Esopus Indians, they again began to harass the colonists. In October 1658, Stuyvesant was forced to travel to the Esopus region for a second attempt to settle matters. This time the director-general took with him Martin Cregier, Pieter Wolphertsen van Couwenhoven, Pieter Cornelissen van der Veen, and Augustijn Hermann as mediators. Although these individuals had some personal experience with Native Americans, the director-general primarily selected them for their personal loyalty to him. Like Stuyvesant, all four men were prominent members of New Amsterdam society. Such reliance on prominent colonists with only limited experience as go-betweens demonstrates that loyalty and status were often more important in the selection of mediators than actual cross-cultural expertise. Unsurprisingly, Stuyvesant’s diplomacy failed again. Instead of taking advice from colonists who could have emphasized the importance of gift giving, the director-general

\footnote{493 VRBM, 837, 839 (Indian attacks on Chambers’ cattle); DRCHSNY, 13: 77 (quotations).}
demanded that the natives yield to the Dutch all “the land from the Esopus so far as I have viewed it.”

The Esopus leaders, “Pappequahen, Preuwamackan, and Nachamatt,” replied through the interpreters Chambers and Stoll “that they were inclined to peace and friendship, but our demands were too great and they are badly provided with wampum.”

In an attempt to resolve the fractured intercultural relationship, the three Esopus leaders suggested that the Susquehannocks could play a role as mediators. Although colonists generally did not document intra-native relations, the available records indicate that the Susquehannocks influenced the foreign relations of the Esopus Indians. This was not uncommon in mid-Atlantic North America, where rivaling native peoples often struggled for political and economic power. However, Stuyvesant distrusted the Susquehannocks, who had orchestrated a major Indian attack on New Amsterdam in 1655. Several Esopus chiefs eventually presented Dutch officials with a large tract of land in late October, 1658. The Esopus leaders were willing to cede territory as long as Stuyvesant reciprocated with a steady stream of trade goods.

494 DRCHSNY, 13: 93-94. For the prominent social positions of the four mediators, see for instance their presence among the names of appointed officials and magistrates in Zegenrijk Gewest, 484-486. Cregier was one of the burgemeesters or mayors of New Amsterdam from 1653-1663. Van Couwenhoven had been schepen or city magistrate during the same period. Herrman was a prominent colonist and mercantile agent. In 1659 he made an important diplomatic mission to the colony of Maryland on behalf of Stuyvesant. See Frijhoff, Wegen van Evert Willemsz, 854-855; Clayton Colman Hall, ed., and A.J.F. van Laer, rev. transl., “Journal of the Dutch Embassy to Maryland, by Augustine Herrman, 1659,” in: Clayton Colman Hall, ed. Narratives of Early Maryland, 1638-1684 309-334 (Original Narratives of Early American History) (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910): 309-334.

495 DRCHSNY, 13: 94-95 (quotations), 96-97 (Esopus Indians cede lands to Dutch). For Indian-Indian relations in Northeastern North America, see the various essays in Richter and Merrell, Beyond the Covenant Chain. See also Cynthia Jean Van Zandt, “Negotiating Settlement: Colonialism, Cultural Exchange, and Conflict in Early Colonial Atlantic North America, 1580-1660,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Connecticut, 1998), chapter 3.
When it became clear to the Esopus Indians by the spring of 1659 that Stuyvesant was not delivering the goods, they resumed their harassment of the colonists. In a final attempt to persuade the Dutch to provide them with gifts, a large Esopus delegation of almost one hundred people visited the local Company fort in early September. During their visit, the Esopus Indians emphasized that they were “altogether willing to be peaceful and had no more evil intentions, as one fire is burning between us and we may go to sleep on either side with safety.” The delegation also referred to a recent visit by “two Minquas Sachems, Sinnekenks, and southern Indians,” in which these Indian envoys had advised the Esopus Indians “to reconcile themselves again with the Christians.” Finally, the Esopus delegation presented several wampum belts to compensate the colonists for their recent losses.496

The colonists were unsure what to make of the Esopus diplomatic overtures. They promised the Indians that Stuyvesant would soon visit them for an official meeting. At the same time, they demonstrated their ignorance of native diplomacy. In a letter to the director-general, they asked, “What we shall do with the wampum?” Since Stuyvesant believed that the Esopus Indians would not dare to provoke a war, he ignored the request from Esopus colonists to visit them again. Other crises preoccupied him, such as a renewal of intercultural tensions in southern New Netherland and the growing threat of the neighboring English colonies.497


The Dutch failure to respond to the wampum offerings of the Esopus Indians had dire consequences. After an incident between drunken Esopus warriors and Company soldiers, the Esopus Indians started a full-scale war against the colonists in September 1659. Within several days, Indian warriors killed and captured a large number of colonists. Stuyvesant, outraged, scrambled to organize a military campaign. But increasing tensions with the neighboring English colonies dissuaded him from sending Company soldiers to the Esopus region. Although the director-general would have liked to bring the Esopus Indians under heel, he simply lacked adequate military resources. Nor would the colonists at Manhattan and Long Island accompany Stuyvesant to the Esopus as a civilian militia; they were afraid of Indian attacks on their own homes.498

Like his predecessor Kieft, Stuyvesant was only able to bring the conflict with the Esopus Indians to an end by relying on native go-betweens. The Mohawks were initially reluctant to get involved in the Esopus War because the Dutch at Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck had recently refused to help them in their wars against the French and their Indian allies. The Mohawks eventually intervened in order to stabilize the valuable Dutch relationship. Since the Esopus region was strategically located along the main communication line between Fort Orange and Manhattan, the intercultural war threatened the flow of Dutch trade goods to the Mohawks. Moreover, by intervening in the Esopus-Dutch war, the Mohawks could reassert their influence over the Algonquian peoples that lived along the Hudson Valley. In June 1660, the Mohawks send a Mahican sachem to the Esopus Indians to obtain the release of the Dutch captives. The Mohawks also instructed the Mahican mediator to warn the Esopus Indians not to harm their

prisoners.\textsuperscript{499}

The Mohawks were not the only Indians who got involved as mediators in the Esopus conflict. In order to reassert their independence from the Mohawks, several Mahican sachems traveled southward to mediate a peace as well. The Susquehannocks also became involved, because they considered the Esopus Indians to be under their control. In addition, the Susquehannocks hoped to improve their relationship with the Dutch. The Algonquian-speaking Catskill and Wappinger Indians also sent mediators to the Esopus region. These two peoples were neighbors of the Esopus Indians, and they feared that the conflict would spill over into their homelands. Finally, several civil chiefs of the Algonquian peoples from southern New Netherland profiled themselves as mediators as well. In March 1660 “Oratam,” “Tapousagh,” “Mettano,” “Corruspin,” and “Achkhongh” renewed peace on behalf of their kinsmen with the Dutch at the city hall of New Amsterdam. In this treaty, the Algonquian leaders affirmed peace with the Dutch because they were afraid to get caught up in the Esopus conflict. These small Algonquian communities were increasingly outnumbered by Dutch and English colonists. Formally distancing themselves from the Esopus Indians, the Algonquian negotiators hoped to maintain the independence of their peoples.\textsuperscript{500}

In the meantime, Stuyvesant had sent military detachments to the Esopus region.

\textsuperscript{499} Gehring, \textit{Fort Orange Court Minutes}, 463-464. See also \textit{DRCHSNY}, 13: 123. The unnamed Mahican sachem may have been Skiwias.

Although the Esopus Indians generally avoided an open confrontation with the better-armed soldiers and colonists, the Dutch forces killed and captured a considerable number of natives in several skirmishes. Even more damaging for the Esopus Indians was the destruction of their stored food supplies in the spring of 1660. Because of these setbacks, the Esopus leaders recognized the need to negotiate an end to the conflict. Through a continuing series of talks during the summer of 1660, Mohawk, Mahican, Catskill, Wappinger, Hackensack, and Haverstraw mediators persuaded the Esopus leaders to make peace with the Dutch. The Indian go-betweens frequently traveled back and forth between colonial towns and the Esopus villages and presented wampum belts to symbolize peaceful intentions.501

Stuyvesant gradually acknowledged the value of mediators as well. In early May he employed the services of Claes de Ruijter (the colonist who had previously explored the Catskill region while looking for a copper mine). De Ruijter probably had extensive experience as an interpreter and bosloper because he was dispatched with special instructions to bring the civil chiefs to the Dutch for peace talks, “but only upon good and safe conditions.” In early July De Ruijter persuaded the Esopus Indian leaders to meet with Stuyvesant outside the Esopus fort. During this conference, Stuyvesant did not use the services of De Ruijter but instead relied on the skills of “one of the active Burgomasters and a former Burgomaster of this City [New Amsterdam], namely the Worshipful Marten Cregier and Oloff Stevenson van Cortlandt.” Although De Ruijter had shown himself a reliable and valuable mediator, the director-general continued to prefer

501 Trelease, Indian Affairs, 154-158. For the Indian mediators and their use of wampum, see DRCHSNY, 13: 164 (Susquehannocks), 166-167 (Hackensacks, Wecquasgeeks, Wappingers, Haverstraws), 168-169 (Mahicans).
members of the New Amsterdam elite. The director-general also made use of the skills of Arent van Curler, the Rensselaerswijck official who had extensive experience as a negotiator to the Mohawks.  

Stuyvesant and his three mediators met various Indian go-betweens at Esopus on July 11. Three days later, four Esopus chiefs or spokesmen arrived at the fort. The negotiations took place over the course of one evening and the next day, and they were dominated by the influential Mohawks and Susquehannocks. The Mahican and Algonquian representatives played a secondary role as mediators between the Mohawks and Susquehannocks on the one side and the Esopus Indians on the other. Because they wanted to maintain valuable trade relations with the Dutch, the Mohawk and Susquehannock envoys forced the Esopus chiefs to accept unfavorable peace conditions. The Mohawk spokesman “Adoghwatque” told the Esopus chiefs to conclude peace with the Dutch now, “for if you begin again and do not heed us, we shall most surely not intercede for you another time.” Similarly, one of the two Susquehannock envoys humiliated the Esopus chiefs by telling them that “it is not your land, but it is ours, therefore do not begin it [the war] again, but throw down the hatchet and trample it into the ground, that the hatchet may never again be taken up.”

Under pressure from their powerful Mohawk and Susquehannock neighbors, the four Esopus chiefs made peace with the Dutch. The first treaty article stated hopefully, “all hostilities on either side shall cease and all acts and injuries shall be forgotten and

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forgiven by either side.” However, the other articles revealed that the peace was very disadvantageous for the Esopus Indians. In the second article, these people were forced to “convey, as indemnification, to the aforesaid Director-General all the territory of the Esopus and to remove to a distance from there, without ever returning again to plant.” In addition, the natives were ordered to pay a large amount of corn to Company authorities. Moreover, if they killed any livestock or “even a chicken,” the Indians would have to pay the colonists for any damages or be put in jail.504

Although the peace allowed unarmed Esopus Indians to trade with colonists, the treaty did not address any of the Indian grievances that had led to the war in the first place. The problem of gift giving was completely neglected by Stuyvesant. Because he considered the Esopus Indians to have been the aggressors, Stuyvesant did not provide the Esopus chiefs with any substantial trade goods. The director-general only distributed one piece of cloth as well as three Indian captives to the four chiefs. Once again Stuyvesant’s mediators supported the harsh treatment of the Esopus Indians. All mediators were prominent colonists who thought that the Esopus Indians had to be punished severely rather than accommodated.505

6. The Second Esopus War, 1663-1664

The failure of Stuyvesant to adequately compensate the Esopus Indians with trade goods eventually led to the outbreak of the second Esopus War. The Dutch unwillingness to distribute gifts and the rapidly growing number of colonists caused great anger. In May

504 *DRCHSNY*, 13: 183 (first quotation); 179-181 (treaty conditions).

1661 the previously unincorporated community at Esopus became an official village with its own court of justice. Because of its proximity to the Indians, the town was named *Wiltwijck* or “Wildentown.” By the spring of 1662, prominent colonists from the overcrowded town of Beverwijck incorporated a new village, simply called *Nieuwdorp* or “New-village.” After several years of intercultural tensions, in the spring of 1663 Esopus warriors openly attacked both Wiltwijck and Nieuwdorp. Remarkably, the Esopus Indians gained entrance in the fortified town under pretense of trade. The willingness of colonists to barter goods with potentially hostile Indians demonstrated that the distrust was sometimes set aside in the face of the practical considerations of the frontier exchange economy. However, after they gained entrance into the town the Indians killed or captured a large number of colonists. Moreover, the large number of female and child captives provided the Esopus Indians with valuable bargaining chips.

Like the first Esopus War, the second one ended as a result of a combination of destructive Dutch retaliatory attacks and the actions of Indian diplomats. On June 17, 1663, Stuyvesant and the Council resolved to use military campaigns to defeat the “deceitful and treacherous nation.” At the same time, the Company government asked the Mohawks to ransom hostage colonists. Stuyvesant also desired that relatives of captured

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507 *DRCHSNY*, 13: 245, 256-257 (attacks on Wiltwijck and Nieuwdorp), 245-247 (Dutch losses). See also Trelease, *Indian Affairs*, 160-161. Trelease largely blames the ongoing liquor trade and Stuyvesant’s failure to send Esopus captives back to their people for triggering the second Esopus War. However, the liquor trade does not appear to have angered the Esopus Indians too much. Instead, the liquor trade was primarily a problem among the colonists themselves. For example, in January 1663 Wiltwijck officials were suspicious that traders from Nieuwdorp aggressively cornered the liquor market with the Indians. See *DRCHSNY*, 13: 237-238.
colonists raise funds that could be used as possible ransom money. Unfortunately for the Dutch, the Mohawks were preoccupied with major conflicts against the Susquehannocks and New England Algonquians. However, one Mohawk headman volunteered to serve as mediator. On June 26, the court magistrates of Rensselaerswijck and Fort Orange were visited by “the savage, called Smith’s Jan [Smits Jan], who presented himself and offered his services, saying that he felt himself driven to it by his conscience” to ransom the Dutch captives.508

That the court officials failed to recognize Smits Jan as a child of a Dutch father suggests that the man was a Mohawk in behavior and dress. The reference to his conscience and the fact that no other Mohawks came forward to aid the Dutch may have indicated that Smits Jan felt obliged by his part-Dutch background to help the colonists. On June 27, Smits Jan, together with three other Mohawks, the Dutch interpreter Jan Dareth, and the Mahican chief Skiwias, left Fort Orange in a Dutch yacht to travel to the Esopus region. Although Smits Jan worked hard to obtain the release of Dutch hostages, his mission had only limited success. Some of the Esopus chiefs were unwilling to release their hostages because Smits Jan did not provide enough gifts and wampum. The Mohawk chief was eventually able to secure the release of one captive by giving “his own strings of wampum” to an Esopus sachem.509

508 *DRCHSNY*, 13: 252 (first quotation and plan to raise funds for hostages), 261 (arrival of Smits Jan). Dutch officials first wanted to make use of the services of “Jacques the Mestis savage” or Jacques Cornelisse van Slijck, the Mohawk-Dutch colonist who was one of the children of Cornelis Anthonisz van Slijck. For the Mohawks and their wars against neighboring Indian peoples, see Jose Antonio Brandão, “Your Fire Shall Burn no More”: Iroquois Policy toward New France and Its Native Allies to 1701 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), Table D1; Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, chapters 6 and 7.

509 On Smits Jan, see Grassmann, “Flemish Bastard.” On Smits Jan’s expedition to the Esopus region, see *DRCHSNY*, 13: 261, 264. On the difficulties of the mission, see *DRCHSNY,*
Smits Jan and the other go betweens returned to Fort Orange in early July. The Mohawk headman tried to put a positive spin on his failed rescue mission by boasting that he could go down to the Esopus region and attack with “44 Maquaes, there being 44 prisoners still in their [Esopus] hands.” Although Stuyvesant was initially excited about Smits Jan’s plan, Dutch authorities on the Upper Hudson Valley rejected it as “too dangerous.” They clearly did not entirely trust the young Mohawk. According to the Dutch officials, Smits Jan “was tipsy at the time” he made the offer. Moreover, the Dutch magistrates claimed that Smits Jan had “made the offer without knowledge of the older fellow chiefs of the Maquaes.” Because Smits Jan had less influence than he claimed, Dutch officials decided not to make further use of his services.

Having dismissed Smits Jan, the Dutch reluctantly relied on several Algonquian leaders from the greater Manhattan area and Northern New Jersey to negotiate with the Esopus Indians. Shortly after the outbreak of the second Esopus war, Stuyvesant summoned “Oratamin, Sachem or chief of Hackinkesaky and Mattanoa, Sachem of Nayeck and Staten Island,” to the Council chamber at Fort Amsterdam to ensure that the local Algonquians remained neutral. Oratamin and Mettano replied that “they will not meddle with the war,” and “that they will not allow any Esopus savage to hide among them.” By affirming their friendship with the Dutch and their neutrality, the two

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510 DRCHSNY, 13: 274, 275, 278. On the rejection of Smits Jan’s plan, see DRCHSNY, 13: 283.
Algonquian chiefs were able to keep their small communities out of the frontier war. At the same time, Stuyvesant and many colonists were afraid that the loosely allied Algonquian communities would join the Esopus Indians and turn against the Dutch. In this climate of mutual suspicion, Oratamin emerged as a shrewd mediator between the Esopus Indians and the Dutch. He frequently traveled back and forth between the Esopus region and Fort Amsterdam to inform Stuyvesant about the intentions and activities of the Esopus Indians.\footnote{\textit{DRCHSNY}, 13: 261-262 (quotations), 276-277, 280, 294 (shuttle diplomacy of Oratamin).}

Despite the substantial aid of Indian go-betweens like Oratamin, Stuyvesant preferred to work with colonial go-betweens whom he could trust. The most important Dutch mediator employed by Stuyvesant in the second Esopus War was Pieter Wolphertsen van Couwenhoven. The director-general had previously employed him during the first Esopus war. Stuyvesant understood that the mediator was “well versed in the savage tongue,” and Stuyvesant appreciated his high social status. Van Couwenhoven’s inconsistent relationship with Indians was typical of many colonists in New Netherland. On the one hand, he showed contempt for Indians by acting as an aggressive frontier trader. In July 1663, Algonquian spokesmen complained to Stuyvesant that Van Couwenhoven had supplied brandy to them despite their protests. The Algonquian leaders were especially angry with Van Couwenhoven for having taken large amounts of sewant beads as compensation for the liquor that he had distributed among the natives against the chiefs’ wishes. On the other hand, his personal relations with Native Americans were sometimes unusually close. In March 1664, Van Couwenhoven reported to Stuyvesant that “A savage, called Hickemick, came to my
house and said, Friend, I must tell you something.” Hickemick went on to relate a
detailed account of dangerous negotiations between the Esopus and Wappinger Indians
and the “English of Westchester”. Hickemick’s willingness to share this information
demonstrated that Van Couwenhoven had also established very close ties with at least
some Indians.512

The director-general dispatched Van Couwenhoven as main mediator on the
Dutch expedition that was sent to the Esopus region. This small force was commanded by
Marten Cregier and consisted of a mixture of Company soldiers, civilian militia, a few
African slaves, and some forty Long Island Algonquians. Van Couwenhoven had orders
to obtain the release of the captive colonists and to keep neighboring Algonquian peoples
out of the war. During his activities as go-between, Van Couwenhoven frequently relied
on other intercultural diplomats. In July, 1663, he repeatedly used the linguistic skills of
Jan Dareth as well as individual Mohawk mediators and other Indians during his
negotiations with the Esopus natives.513

Despite all the efforts of Van Couwenhoven and his Indian and Dutch linguistic
assistants, they had less to do with the end of the conflict than did Cregier’s destructive
attacks. With the help of one released Indian captive, Cregier and his men were able to
attack one of the Esopus villages in July 1663. Although almost all natives escaped,

512 DRCHSNY, 13: 304 (first quotation), 277 (Van Couwenhoven stealing wampum), 363
(Hickemick account). The role of the Indians in Anglo-Dutch rivalries in New Netherland is a
topic that I intend to research in the future. For Van Couwenhoven, see also Shaw, “Building
New Netherland,” 117-118. Of course it is possible that Hickemick was simply lying to play off
the Dutch against the English.

513 DRCHSNY, 13: 288-289, 290-291, 300-301 (instructions for Van Couwenhoven), 326-
328 (Jan Dareth and Mohawk mediators). It is not known if Smits Jan was one of the Mohawk
mediators. For Cregier’s expedition, see Trelease, Indian Affairs, 162 and Cregier’s “Journal of
Cregier’s men destroyed large amounts of corn and beans. Cregier soon planned a new assault on the other Esopus villages. In early September, some fifty Dutch troops set out from fort Wiltwijck, guided by a Wappinger sachem who had been captured while trying to form an alliance with the Esopus Indians. To communicate with this chief, Cregier relied on the English trader Christoffel Davids as interpreter. Thanks to this Wappinger chief and the linguistic aid of Davids, the Dutch soon found the Esopus village and immediately attacked. According to Cregier’s report, some thirty natives were killed, including the chief Papequanaehen. In addition, while fourteen Indians were taken prisoner, the Dutch forces freed twenty-three colonists.  

Because of their heavy losses in people, food-resources, and valuable hostages, the remaining Esopus leaders soon sought peace with the Dutch. Still, Van Couwenhoven and his fellow mediators were only partially successful in bringing an end to the conflict. Since a small number of colonists remained in the Esopus and Wappinger captivity, Stuyvesant provided Van Couwenhoven with two other colonial go-betweens to renew talks with the Indians. The director-general dispatched the militia sergeant Pieter Ebel and “the son-in-law of Paulus, the guardian, namely Andries, who well understands and speaks the savages’ tongue.” The skills of Andries were deemed especially useful because Stuyvesant instructed Van Couwenhoven to “take him with you, when you speak with the savages.” Although the identity of this Andries is not clear, he may have been

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Harmen Douwesen who was later referred to by Stuyvesant as one of the two interpreters to support Van Couwenhoven.  

Even with the help of these two mediators Van Couwenhoven did not succeed in ending the Esopus War. Because they distrusted the Dutch, the Esopus chiefs only made peace through the intercession of the Algonquian negotiators Oratamin and Matteno. On December 10, 1663, chief Oratamin entered the Council chamber at Fort Amsterdam and he informed Stuyvesant and the councilors “that the Wappings, Esopus and other savages were very glad, that the Dutch were willing to make at their request a peace with them.” Oratamin also told the colonial officials that the Esopus chiefs were willing to bring with them the remaining “5 captive Christians.” The actual peace negotiations were delayed until the spring of 1664 because the Esopus Indians were forced to look for adequate food resources, since Cregier had destroyed all their corn supplies in the fall. Throughout the winter of 1663-1664 Oratamin and Matteno continued to visit Stuyvesant to assure him that the Esopus Indians were still sincerely interested in making peace.

During their meetings, the Algonquian mediators and Stuyvesant were forced to rely on skilled interpreters. Oratamin and Matteno did not know Dutch and the director-general and his councilors lacked an adequate understanding of the Algonquian trade jargons. To facilitate intercultural communication they employed the services of Van Couwenhoven as well as two colonial women. On December 29, 1663, Van

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515 *DRCHSNY*, 13: 302 (quotations). For the possibility that Douwesen is the same as Andries, see *DRCHSNY*, 13: 304. Ebel was a remarkable choice for mediator. In 1644 he had taken an Indian with him to the Republic in order to exhibit him as a curiosity at fairs in and around Amsterdam. See *Zegenrijk Gewest*, 333.

516 *DRCHSNY*, 13: 314 (December 10 meeting), 320-322 (December 28 meeting), 361 (February 23 meeting), 361-362 (March 6 meeting), 364-365 (March 25 meeting), 371-372 (April 26 meeting).
Couwenhoven and Trientje Evertsen served as translators between colonial authorities and the two Algonquian leaders. In April 1664, Sara Kierstede functioned as the sole interpreter during a summit at the Council chamber in which Oratamin brought the released captive Aeltie Sybrants to Stuyvesant. The presence of Evertsen and Kierstede at these important diplomatic councils demonstrated that both the Algonquian mediators and the colonial government could trust colonial women as interpreters. The Algonquians likely accepted the two women because they were not associated with the aggressive government of Stuyvesant. Moreover, Sara Kierstede’s high social status helped to make her an acceptable mediator for Stuyvesant. Although it is unknown what status Evertsen occupied in colonial society, both women clearly had expert linguistic skills that made colonial authorities temporarily set aside gender notions in diplomacy.\footnote{\textit{DRCHSNY}, 13: 321 (Evertsen), 371-372 (Sara). See also Shaw, “Building New Netherland,” 311-313.}

At the same time, Stuyvesant only used the linguistic talents of the two women in Fort Amsterdam. While Van Couwenhoven and other male mediators were frequently dispatched on missions to Indian country, all the documented cases where the two women occurred as interpreters were set in Fort Amsterdam itself. Although it is tempting to explain the limited use of Kierstede and Evertsen mobility Perhaps because Stuyvesant was reluctant to It is therefore possible that Stuyvesant deliberately attempted to keep Kierstede and Evertsen under his control in Fort Amsterdam because on were apparently only allowed to operate as mediators in and around Fort Amsterdam. However, it is possible that Stuyvesant and the Council By restricting the activities of Kierstede and Evertsen to the Council Chamber, Stuyvesant and the Council revealed their anxieties over using female go-betweens. At the same time, Sara’s and Trientje’s sex did not
necessarily make them more sympathetic to Indians. When Sara made her testament in
English New York in 1693, she indicated that one of her six slaves was an Indian named
“Ande.” Although it is unknown how Sara obtained “Ande,” it is remarkable that the
woman who had interacted so closely with Indians kept a Native American as a slave.
Moreover, Ande’s status as a slave was especially ambiguous since colonists in New
Netherland and English New York did generally not keep Indians as slaves.518

On May 15, 1664, Esopus and Wappinger sachems finally arrived in Fort
Amsterdam to make a treaty. While Oratamin and Matteno served as mediators on their
behalf, Sara was the main interpreter at all proceedings. The treaty conditions
demonstrated that the colonial authorities wanted to keep the colonists strictly segregated
from the Esopus Indians. Natives were no longer allowed to come on colonial lands or to
visit colonial settlements in the Esopus region. In the future the Indians could only
exchange goods and foodstuffs “with a flag of truce” at the local Company fort or at Fort
Orange and Manhattan. Finally, Stuyvesant forced the Esopus Indians to come down to
Fort Amsterdam each year to renew the treaty and exchange a present with the Dutch.519

Stuyvesant recognized Oratamin and Matteno for their important services as go-
betweens. In a special treaty clause the two Algonquian negotiators agreed to become
“securities for this peace” who had to oversee that it was “kept well and inviolate.” By
continuing their roles as peacekeepers, Oratamin and Matteno were able to maintain
friendly relations with the numerically superior Dutch colonists. To demonstrate his good

518 On Sara’s Indian slave, see Frijhoff, *Wegen van Evert Willemsz*, 771.

519 *DRCHSNY*, 13: 375-377 (official treaty). Other interpreters who signed their names on
the document are Govert Loockermans, Van Couwenhoven, and Thomas Chambers. However,
Sara is mentioned as the only interpreter in the text as well. For the quote, see *DRCHSNY*, 13:
376.
intentions, Oratamin brought one Esopus chief to Fort Amsterdam in July 1664 who had been unable to attend the original treaty in May. At this treaty Sara Kierstede again functioned as the sole interpreter. After this official conference in July the second Esopus War was finally brought to an end. 520

The Algonquian leaders lost their strategic influence as negotiators after the English conquest of New Netherland in early September 1664. When governor Richard Nicolls negotiated a treaty between the Esopus Indians and English in October 1665, the signatures of Algonquian mediators were markedly absent. The newly arrived English colonial official felt no need to rely on the Algonquian go-betweens but instead directly negotiated with the Esopus Indians. However, the Indian leaders from western Long Island, Staten Island, and the Bronx continued to uphold friendly relations with the new colonial power by paying regular diplomatic visits to New York City. Since the colonial population of New York continued to grow rapidly throughout the rest of the seventeenth century, the Algonquian sachems realized that a peaceful alliance with colonial officials was the only way to keep some autonomy for their increasingly marginalized communities. 521

Unlike the Algonquian leaders, colonial women no longer acted as intercultural diplomats after the English conquest of New Netherland. Although women like Sara Kierstede and Trientje Evertsen had served as Indian interpreters under Stuyvesant’s rule

520 *DRCHSNY*, 13: 377. The clause even required Oratamin and Matteno to take up arms against the Dutch if the Dutch broke the treaty.

because of their unique linguistic skills, the English colonial government proved to be less pragmatic. The English authorities were reluctant to rely on female go-betweens because women were traditionally excluded from diplomacy and long-distance trade. In addition, it is possible that Sara was not useful as interpreter for the English because she did not speak their language. Significantly, during the short-lived Dutch conquest of New York from 1673 to 1674, Sara Kierstede was reappointed as one of the official Indian interpreters for the Dutch colonial government. But as soon as the English regained New York in 1674, English authorities dispensed with Sara’s linguistic talents.522

7. Managing Mohawk-Dutch Diplomacy, 1635-1664

Relations between the Mohawks and Dutch were not marred by conflicts such as those on the Lower Hudson Valley. Most historians have identified the cross-cultural trade in American furs and European goods as the main explanation for peaceful Dutch-Mohawk relations. As long as the Dutch were able to obtain valuable animal pelts and as long as the Mohawks had access to a ready supply of trade goods, the relationship remained amicable. According to historian Allen Trelease, “Peace was maintained because both sides had everything to lose and nothing to gain by hostilities. The fur trade was a going concern – not lucrative enough to support the province but sufficient to

522 For Sara as interpreter in 1673, see E.B. O’Callaghan, ed. Register of New Netherland, 1626-1674 (Albany: 1865), 134. For English attitudes toward female mediators, see Merrell, Into the Woods, 70. For the roles of women in colonial English North America, see Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, Good Wives: Image and Reality in Northern New England, 1650-1750 (New York: Random House, 1980). English colonial officials did make use of Hilletie van Slijck or Olinda as interpreter in the Albany-Schenectady region during the late seventeenth century. See Burke, Mohawk Frontier, 148-149, 173-174. However, the English seem to have made an exception for Hilletie because her mother was a Mohawk. For the short-lived Dutch conquest of New York, see Donald G. Shomette and Robert D. Haslach, Raid on America: The Dutch Naval Campaign of 1672-1674 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988).
maintain and enlarge the local community. The two races regarded each other less often as corn thieves, trespassers, or Indian givers than as sources as economic prosperity.\textsuperscript{523}

Another explanation for the absence of intercultural violence on the Upper Hudson Valley was the relatively slow growth of the colonial population in the region. In contrast to southern New Netherland, where the number of Dutch and English settlers steadily increased after 1645, the colonial communities on the Upper Hudson Valley remained very small. Even though the patroonship of Rensselaerswjick extended over a considerable territory on both sides of the Upper Hudson River, the Mohawks did not feel threatened. The ambitious Rensselaerswjick directors were unable to transform their colony into a profitable agricultural estate because they failed to attract enough colonists to work as farm laborers for a small salary. The chronic labor shortage as well as the environmental circumstances resulted in the development of Rensselaerswjick into a large horse and cattle ranch.\textsuperscript{524}

Neither did the colonial communities that were under direct WIC jurisdiction in the Upper Hudson Valley pose a demographic threat to the Mohawks. Stuyvesant incorporated the town of Beverwijck, just outside Fort Orange, only in 1652. The total number of residents in this town barely exceeded more than 1,000 throughout the period of Dutch colonial rule. Moreover, unlike the sprawling farm-communities of southern New Netherland that encroached on Indian agricultural fields, Beverwijck was modeled

\textsuperscript{523} Trelease, \textit{Indian Affairs}, 115. Trelease’s argument is supported by Dennis, \textit{Cultivating a Landscape of Peace}, chapter 5; Richter, \textit{Ordeal of the Longhouse}, chapter 4; Fenton, \textit{Great Law}, chapter 19.

after tightly compacted mercantile villages in the United Provinces. Although the town of Schenectady, which was founded northwest of Beverwijck in 1661, was planned as an agricultural community with outlying fields, this Dutch village did not experience much growth. According to one estimate, in 1690 the Schenectady population did not exceed 150 persons. Because the number of colonists remained limited and circumscribed to a small area, the Mohawks could easily maintain their political and territorial autonomy.\(^{525}\)

If peace had these advantages, it is also true that Mohawk and Dutch frontier diplomats worked hard to maintain the mutually advantageous system of material exchange. Whenever a crisis threatened, both sides dispatched experienced negotiators to patch up their differences. While Mohawk mediators and spokesmen frequently visited Fort Orange, small delegations of colonial go-betweens sometimes traveled to villages in Mohawk country. During these councils, the Dutch mediators closely adhered to such indigenous customs of diplomacy as the distribution of wampum and presents to strengthen peaceful relations. Because of their willingness to cross the cultural divide and to take the concerns of the other side seriously, native and colonial go-betweens successfully prevented the outbreak of interethnic hostilities on the Upper Hudson Valley during the period of Dutch colonial rule.

One factor that contributed to the efficiency of Mohawk-Dutch diplomacy was the absence of interference from the company government in New Amsterdam. Unlike Indian-Dutch relations in southern New Netherland, intercultural diplomacy at the Dutch enclaves on the Upper Hudson Valley was controlled by local officials rather than by

\(^{525}\) For the population and buildings of Beverwijck, see Shattuck, “Civil Society,” 12-15; Donna Merwick, “Dutch Townsmen and Land Use: A Spatial Perspective on Seventeenth Century Albany, New York,” WMQ, XXXVII, no. 1 (1980): 53-78; Merwick, Possessing Albany, chapter 2. For Schenectady, see Burke, Mohawk Frontier, esp. 110 (1690 population estimate).
authorities in New Amsterdam. Although the colony of Rensselaerswyck was ruled by a judicial court independent from the one at Fort Orange, in diplomatic relations with Indians, both courts closely cooperated. The directors-general based at Manhattan kept up a frequent correspondence with Fort Orange, but Kieft and Stuyvesant did not directly involve themselves much with Indian affairs upriver, as long as large quantities of animal furs were shipped to New Amsterdam. Dutch diplomatic relations with the Mohawks were therefore not undermined by the arrogant policies of Kieft and Stuyvesant that had proven to be so counterproductive in southern New Netherland.\footnote{Communication between Fort Orange and Manhattan was usually maintained by ships throughout the year except in wintertime when Indian runners were hired. For the courts of Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck, see the insightful discussion by A.J.F. van Laer in Gehring, Fort Orange Council Minutes, xxvi-xxix. See also Dennis Sullivan, The Punishment of Crime in Colonial New York: The Dutch Experience in Albany During the Seventeenth Century (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), chapter 1.}

Despite the ability of Dutch and Mohawk diplomats to work together and resolve crises, intercultural mediators on the Upper Hudson Valley distrusted each other and remained firmly committed to their own cultures. Far from being friendly and easygoing, many formal meetings between Mohawk and Dutch negotiators in the region were fraught with mutual suspicions. Although colonial and native go-betweens closely interacted to preserve the strategic alliance, both sides only did so for practical reasons and not out of any sympathetic feelings for the other culture.

The pragmatism of Mohawk-Dutch diplomacy was clearly revealed when a Dutch delegation paid an official visit to the Mohawks sometime in 1642. This meeting was reportedly the first formal meeting between the Dutch and Mohawks since Harmen Meynderts van den Bogaert’s mission to the Mohawk and Oneida villages in the winter of 1634-1635. Arent van Curler, who had been a prominent Rensselaerswijck official...
since his arrival in the private colony in 1637, led the embassy. The French carpenter Jean Labatie and one Jacob Jansen van Amsterdam, both of whom were employees of the Rensselaerswijck colony, accompanied Van Curler. The Rensselaerswijck official undertook this expedition partly because the Mohawks had recently harassed local colonists and their cattle. Although exact details are unknown, the Mohawks had probably targeted the colonists’ livestock in retaliation for their harassment by colonists. Because the WIC had opened the fur trade to all colonists in 1639, residents of Rensselaerswijck had likely resorted to physical force and intimidation to pressure visiting Mohawks to sell their animal furs. The Mohawks may also have killed Rensselaerswijck livestock because the animals were often unfenced. Like other Native Americans, the Mohawks treated free-ranging cows, pigs, and horses as wild game that could be hunted.527

After they arrived at one of the three Mohawk villages, Van Curler and his two companions distributed several presents among the native leaders and speakers to signify peaceful intentions. The three colonial envoys then “proposed that we should keep on good terms as neighbors and that they [the Mohawks] should do no injury either to the colonists or to their cattle.” The Mohawk leaders accepted the presents “thankfully” and reciprocated by providing food and shelter to Van Curler and the two other envoys. Although no treaty minutes have survived, the three colonial go-betweens established an

important treaty of friendship with the Mohawks that formed the basis for later Mohawk-Dutch relations. To demonstrate their enthusiasm for the newly formed alliance with the Dutch, the Mohawks gave them a ceremonial tour of all three Mohawk villages. According to Van Curler, “We were obliged to halt fully a quarter of an hour before each castle [Indian village] in order that the Indians might salute us by the firing of muskets.”

However, Van Curler’s successful mission was tainted by his insistence that the Mohawks free three recently captured Frenchmen. Among these Frenchmen was the Jesuit missionary Isaac Jogues, “who had been very cruelly treated by the cutting off of the finger and thumb.” When Van Curler proposed the surrender of these captives to a special gathering of all Mohawk leaders, the Indians refused. The Mohawks considered the Frenchmen to be enemies who had aligned themselves with the Hurons and other Indian enemies of the Mohawks. Even after Van Curler offered to ransom the Frenchmen for the large sum of 600 guilders worth of trade goods, the Mohawks refused for cultural and practical reasons. Like other Iroquois peoples, the Mohawks often tortured and killed captives to symbolically avenge the deaths of their own kinsmen. The Mohawks also wanted to hold on to their French hostages so as to use them as leverage in negotiations with French officials.

In order to maintain friendly relations with Van Curler and to preserve the important trade relationship, the Mohawks eventually promised Van Curler that they would not kill their captives. Despite this promise, the Mohawks can not have been

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pleased. Van Curler’s insistence upon the freeing of enemy captives suggested to the Mohawks that the Dutch were inconsistent allies. The Mohawks probably grew even more skeptical of Van Curler after he personally freed Jogues while the Jesuit missionary and his Mohawk captors visited Rensselaerswijck for a trading expedition in 1643. Van Curler’s successful intercession on behalf of the French Jesuit, who was deemed dangerous by the Mohawks because of his status as a religious specialist with possible malevolent powers, must have led the Mohawks to believe that the Dutch considered the French more valuable allies than the Mohawks. Although the Mohawks were involved in an ongoing regional struggle against neighboring native enemies, at this time they probably did not yet detect a racial divide between Europeans and Indians. However, Van Curler’s aid to Jogues taught the Mohawks a revealing lesson about the limits of the Mohawk-Dutch alliance.529

The centrality of practical considerations in the Mohawk-Dutch relationship surfaced again during the late 1640s. Thanks to their trade alliance with the Dutch, which provided them with large amounts of firearms and gunpowder, the Mohawks had quickly become the most powerful Indian nation in the mid-Atlantic region. Heavily armed Mohawk warriors played an important role in the Iroquois destruction of the Hurons. Emboldened by their spectacular military successes against the Hurons, the Mohawks soon expanded their attacks against New England Algonquian peoples as well as against French colonists in the Saint Lawrence Valley. These Indian wars were primarily fought

529 For the 1642 visit, see Van Laer, “Historic Letter, 27-28. For Mohawk Iroquois policies towards captives, see Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, chapter 3. For Jogues’ rescue in 1643, see “Letter and Narrative of Father Isaac Jogues, 1643, 1645,” NNN, 237-263. Jogues returned to the Mohawks in the next years but was killed by a Mohawk in 1646 under the suspicion that he was a witch who had spread sickness among the Mohawks. See Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, 112-113.
for economic and cultural reasons. The Mohawks attempted to corner the lucrative market in furs, and they continuously ambushed Algonquian convoys that sought to trade with the French at Montreal. In addition, almost all native peoples of Northeastern North America attempted aggressively to replenish their populations that had been declining dramatically due to epidemic diseases. By incorporating captive enemies as new members of their weakened communities, the Mohawks and other Iroquois were able to maintain their culture. Contemporary observers noted that at least two-thirds of the Iroquois population consisted of recent captives during the mid-1660s.530

By the late 1640s, the Mohawks considered themselves powerful enough to use the residence of the Rensselaerswijck director as their own headquarters for collecting annual tributes from subjugated Indian peoples. According to Brant Aertsz van Sliichtenhorst, director during the 1640s and early 1650s, “the field commanders [warchiefs] of the Maquaes came into the colony, which lies between them [the Mohawks and their Indian tributaries], and summoned the other nations to appear there.” The Mohawk visitors constantly bullied their Dutch hosts. Van Sliichtenhorst complained that “the field commanders often were so bold as to go sit at the table of their own accord and take food and drink, dividing it among themselves as long as it lasted. I even had to guard against their taking meat and bacon from the loft. And when the commanders had been well entertained for some days, we then had to provide them with corn, beans, peas, an axe, a breechcloth, or a pair of stockings.” When Van Sliichtenhorst protested against these continuing demands, the Mohawks answered “that they had to fight for us

Christians, and that it was necessary to provide them with every weapon: guns, powder, lead, and every other necessity, as the French do for their Indians.” In addition, the Mohawks reminded Van Slichtenhorst that the Dutch “now possessed the lands that they [the Mohawks] had conquered from the Mahikanders, and that they therefore required the Christians [the Dutch] to supply them with everything, otherwise the Christians might just as well go back over the great water.” The shocked Rensselaerswijck director even reported that “if you did not accede to their foul wishes and demands, then they openly dared to threaten to kill the horses, cattle, and hogs, yes, even the Christians themselves.”

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To prevent the ongoing slaughter of costly livestock, Van Slichtenhorst eventually called for a major conference with representatives of the Iroquois. In the summer of 1648, a delegation of twenty-one envoys representing the Mohawks and their western Iroquois neighbors visited Rensselaerswijck. After the Iroquois spokesmen and their families had arrived, Van Slichtenhorst urged the native diplomats to persuade their kinsmen not to “kill either the animals or the horses and pigs that belong to the Christians.” Unfortunately, Van Slichtenhorst did not bother to mention the reply of the Iroquois envoys. Instead, the Rensselaerswijck director complained that the Indian delegates stayed for no less than six days, which not only caused a lot of “stench and filth” but also

531 For Van Slichtenhorst and the Mohawks, see RAG, ORA, “Dossier”, folios 71-72. Some parts of this document have been quoted and discussed in Fenton, Great Law, 274; and Janny Venema, “The Court Case of Brant Aertsz van Slichtenhorst against Jan van Rensselaer,” DHM, LXXV, No. 1 (2001): 3-8. See also G. Beernick, G. De Geschiedschrijver en Rechtsgeleerde Dr. Arend van Slichtenhorst en Zijn Vader Brant van Slichtenhorst, Stichter van Albany, Hoofdstad van de Staat New York (Werken Uitgegeven door Gelre 12) (Arnhem, 1916). It is unknown which Indian nations the Mohawks summoned to Rensselaerswijck. It is possible that the Mahicans and Catskill Algonquians may have been some of the subjugated nations.
cost him a fortune because he had to provide every Indian diplomat with food, shelter, and presents.532

Despite Van Slichtenhorst’ pleas, the Mohawks continued to bully the Dutch colonists. In early July 1649, the main headman or spokesman of the village of “Canasequamen” demanded that colonists immediately provide the Mohawks with two horses and two colonists in order to help with the fortification of the Mohawk town. Van Slichtenhorst was initially unwilling to fulfill this request, and he discussed the matter with Fort Orange officials. However, after the Mohawk diplomat threatened to kill livestock, Van Slichtenhorst quickly dispatched two horses and two colonists to the Mohawks. In the same period, one Mohawk diplomat named “Stick Stiggery” or “Den Uyl” (“the Owl”) ordered Rensselaerswijck and Fort Orange officials to build a small house for him north of the Company fort. Stick Stiggery probably used this house to receive Indian tributaries of the Mohawks. By November 1650, Stick Stiggery’s residence had “become such a great nuisance to the colony as well to the fort,” that Dutch authorities paid “Den Uyl” trade goods so that he abandoned the house. As all these examples demonstrate, Mohawk and Dutch mediators did not easily get along.533

Even though the Mohawks supplied increasingly large numbers of beaver furs to Fort Orange and Beverwijck, Dutch officials continued to be wary of their important Mohawk neighbors. In September 1650, the colonist Rem Jansz testified to the court of

532 RAG, ORA, “Dossier,” folios 71-72. For the “Stench and filth” and Van Slichtenhorst’s expenses, see folio 20.

533 RAG, ORA, “Dossier,” folio 72. See also folio 20-H2 for the testimony of the two colonists who were sent to the Mohawk village. For Stick Stiggery, see A.J.F. van Laer, ed. and trans. Minutes of the Court of Rensselaerswijck, 1648-1652 (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1922), 131-132. Stick Stiggery would later meet with Dutch officials in December 1653. See Gehring, Fort Orange Court Minutes, 76.
Rensselaerswijk that he had heard rumors of an impending Mohawk attack. According to Jansz, “a certain Tappaen savage” had recently told several colonists that “‘You Dutchmen have now been selling guns long enough to the Maquas, for they came to us last summer and made presents in order that we should help them to kill you when the ice was on the water. They also went to the savages to the south and offered them a large nootas [bag] of seawan [sewant/wampum], whereupon they promised to lend them the helping hand.’” Although the story of the “Tappaen savage” from southern New Netherland was clearly invented to discourage Dutch firearm-sales to the Mohawk enemies of the Tappaen Algonquians, Rensselaerswijk officials were so afraid that they dispatched Van Curler and several other experienced mediators to the Mohawks in order “to renew the former alliance and bond of friendship.”

Ironically, Van Curler’s unnecessary mission to the Mohawks succeeded in solidifying ties with the Mohawks. In December 1653, Fort Orange officials even successfully mediated a truce between the Mohawks and the French. Dutch magistrates dispatched Smits Jan, the go-between of Mohawk-Dutch descent, to Canada to convey to French officials the message that the Dutch would “make every effort in our power to keep the Maquas disposed to continue the recently concluded peace” between the Mohawks and the French. Unfortunately, in the summer of 1654, a temporary dearth in trade goods at Fort Orange resulted in renewed Mohawk attacks on colonial livestock and cattle. In order to accommodate the Mohawks, Fort Orange magistrates asked wealthy Beverwijck residents to contribute to the stock of presents that were to be distributed

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534 Van Laer, Rensselaerswijk Minutes, 127-129. Jean Labatie, who by now was a prominent Fort Orange official, did not believe the rumor and refused to accompany Van Curler to the Mohawks. See Trelease, Indian Affairs, 117-118.
among the Mohawks. Although there is no account of this Dutch visit to the Mohawks, the mission was successful. In August 1654, a delegation of Mohawk and other Iroquois envoys traveled to Fort Orange, where they provided colonial officials with a present “according to ancient custom.”

Mohawk-Dutch relations again reached a crisis by the late 1650s. By this period the military successes of the Mohawks declined. Moreover, because of the ongoing wars, the Mohawks were unable to supply the Dutch with large amounts of beaver furs. Since the fur trade played such an important role in the Beverwijck economy, colonists increasingly used physical force and intimidation to wrest the furs from Mohawks who were still able to visit Beverwijck. In early September 1659, the joint courts of Rensselaerswijck and Fort Orange received a delegation of Mohawk envoys who angrily demanded urgent military and material aid. The Mohawks accused the Dutch of having neglected the alliance that had originally been made by Van Curler in the early 1640s. The native spokesmen told the courts that “The Dutch say we are brothers and that we are joined together with chains, but that lasts only as long as we have beavers. After that we are no longer thought of.” The Mohawks also demanded that the Dutch repair the Mohawks’ guns and provide them with more gunpowder. In addition, they asked the Dutch to send 30 men and horses to the Mohawk country to cut and haul wood for the defenses of the Mohawk villages. Finally, the Indian delegates requested that the Dutch

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535 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 76-78 (December 1653; in this meeting, Canaquese or Smits Jan was dispatched to travel to Quebec), 146-147 (July 1654 visit to assuage Mohawk anger), 150 (August 1654 visit). Trelease, *Indian Affairs*, 118, speculates that the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652-1654) caused the scarcity of trade goods in New Netherland.
stop the sale of liquor as well as the physical harassment of Mohawks who visited Beverwijck. 536

The response of the Dutch mediators to the Mohawks once again revealed the limitations of the Mohawk-Dutch alliance. Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck officials initially replied that Stuyvesant would personally meet with the Mohawks to talk about their concerns. When news reached them that the director-general was severely ill, the magistrates of both courts quickly dispatched a prominent mission to the Mohawks consisting of Van Curler, the Rensselaerswijck director Jeremias van Rensselaer, and several others. The seventeen Dutch envoys arrived at the “First Castle of the Maquas called Kaghnuwage” in late September 1659. The colonial go-betweens demonstrated their skills as frontier diplomats by distributing wampum, knives, and large amounts of gunpowder and lead among the assembled Mohawk chiefs. Van Curler and his associates disputed the Mohawk contention that the Dutch did not live up to the covenant between the two peoples. According to a Dutch record of the meeting, the colonial mediators told

536 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 453-454. This council minute of September 6, 1659, contains the first reference to my knowledge about the metaphor of “chains” to describe the alliance between the Iroquois and Europeans. The “iron chain” would later become the “Covenant Chain” uniting colonial New York with the Iroquois peoples. According to this Fort Orange council minute the Mohawks thought that the term originated with the Dutch. Some scholars have pointed out that later (post-1664?) Iroquois traditions claimed that the chain was originally a “rope” between the Mohawks and the Dutch. I have not found any evidence about the “rope” metaphor in contemporary Dutch documents. It is unknown why and exactly when the Dutch came to use the “chain” metaphor. However, Dutch mediators like Van Curler knew how important the use of metaphorical language was for the Iroquois in diplomatic relations. Most likely the Dutch viewed an iron chain as difficult to break and thus a good metaphor for the valuable alliance with the Mohawks. About the term “chain”, see “Glossary of Figures of Speech in Iroquois Political Rhetoric,” *History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy*, 116-117. On the regional wars in the late 1650s, see Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 98-99; Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, chapters 6 and 7.
the Mohawks that the Dutch had not broken the metaphorical “iron chain” that kept the Dutch and Mohawks closely united.537

For all their talk about “our brothers,” “iron chains,” and despite the generous distribution of gunpowder and lead, the Dutch mediators refused to grant most of the Mohawk demands. The colonial negotiators argued that they could not “compel our smiths or gunstock makers to repair the guns of our brothers without receiving pay for it, as they must earn a living for their wives and children.” In addition, the Dutch refused to supply the Mohawks with horses and workers to repair the native villages because “the hills are so high and steep” that the horses would fail, and, as for the workers, “the Dutch cannot carry it out as they become sick merely from marching to this place, as you may see by looking at our people.” The Dutch tried to make up for their refusal by providing fifteen axes, with which the Mohawks could cut wood for palisades themselves. As for the Mohawk demands to curtail the liquor trade, the Dutch envoys told the Mohawk chiefs that they could only stop the sale of alcohol if the Indians stopped buying liquor from colonists. To the irritation of the Mohawks, the Dutch mediators also asked again that the Mohawks release their French prisoners.538

Because the Dutch mediators had refused to accommodate the Mohawk requests to repair their guns and towns, the Mohawks were reluctant to mediate on behalf of the Dutch in the first Esopus War. When the Mohawks eventually intervened in the conflict, it was not because they were concerned about the plight of the Dutch captives, but

537 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 455-459.

538 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 457-459. In this meeting the Dutch also informed the Mohawks about the recent outbreak of the first Esopus War. The Mohawk envoys promised their Dutch counterparts to stay out of the conflict but did not show any indication to become involved as mediators.
because the Mohawks did not want the Dutch-Esopus hostilities to interrupt the flow of valuable trade goods from New Amsterdam to Fort Orange. At the same time, the Mohawks grew increasingly irritated at the Beverwijck residents who harassed them when they brought their animal pelts to town. In a meeting with Fort Orange officials in June 1660, a delegation of Mohawks warned the Dutch to stop beating up Mohawks and other Iroquois otherwise “it might develop into the same trouble as between the Dutch and Indians in the Esopus.” Although Fort Orange commander Johannes la Montagne initially feigned ignorance about the incidents, the Fort Orange court promised the Mohawks “to forbid all inhabitants of this place to go roaming in the woods as brokers to attract the Indians with beavers.”

Since the Fort Orange court lacked an adequate police apparatus, wealthy as well as middling colonists simply continued their practice of intimidating Mohawk and other Iroquois traders. The harassment of Indians by colonists during the trading season became so widespread that even a delegation of “Sinnekus” or western Iroquois traveled to Fort Orange to complain to Dutch authorities. In a special meeting that was also attended by Stuyvesant in late July 1660, the Sinnekus urged “the honorable general [to] warn all the Dutchmen not to beat the Indians anymore.” Although the absence of Fort Orange court records after 1660 makes it impossible to determine if the stalking of Mohawk and other Iroquois outside Beverwijck continued, Dutch officials felt compelled to renew the ordinances prohibiting the use of brokers in 1661 and 1662.

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539 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 463 (Mohawks intervene in First Esopus War), 503 (June 1660 meeting).

540 Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, 515-518 (July conference with Sinnekus). On the absence of court minutes after 1660, see Gehring, *Fort Orange Court Minutes*, xxx. For the ordinances of 1661 and 1662, see E.B. O’Callaghan, ed. and trans. *Laws and Ordinances of New*
The ongoing harassment by Beverwijck residents was one reason why the Mohawks increasingly stayed away from the Dutch communities on the Upper Hudson Valley after 1660. To avoid the aggressive Dutch traders, Mohawks began to visit the recently established trading post of the English trader John Pynchon that was located fifteen miles east from Fort Orange. Another factor that transformed Dutch-Mohawk relations were the rapidly changing fortunes of the Mohawks in their wars against the French and a variety of Indian enemies. The Mohawks had clearly overextended their forces against too many enemies, and they were now pushed back on several fronts. Moreover, during the early 1660s, several smallpox epidemics killed large numbers of Mohawks and other Iroquois. The Mohawks were so weakened by military defeats and diseases that they made their first land cession to the Dutch in 1661. Although the lands in question – the flats at Schenectady - had originally belonged to the Mahicans and had never been inhabited by the Mohawks, the transaction brought the aggressive Beverwijck residents much closer to Mohawk country.541

The main Dutch buyer of the Mohawk lands was no one less than Arent van Curler. Historians have traditionally depicted Van Curler as a classic frontiersman, an early Natty Bumppo. However, Van Curler was not only fascinated by Indians or interested in the fur trade, he was also an enterprising colonist who experimented with

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541 For smallpox among the Mohawks and Iroquois, see Richter, Ordeal of the Longhouse, 58-59. For Pynchon, see ldem, 95-96, and Carl Bridenbaugh, ed. The Pynchon Papers, Volume 1: Letters of John Pynchon, 1654-1700 (Boston: Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1882), esp. the introduction. On the land-sale of 1661, see Burke, Mohawk Frontier, chapter 1.
many economic ventures to obtain financial wealth and social status in colonial society. For instance, Van Curler had coveted the Schenectady flats as the “most beautiful land that [the] eye may wish to see,” ever since his diplomatic visit to the Mohawks in 1642. In 1661 he finally obtained permission from Stuyvesant to buy the fertile grasslands from the Mohawks. While Van Curler was also interested in using Schenectady as a way to gain better trade access to the Iroquois, he invested in the Schenectady project to transform the Upper Hudson Valley into an agricultural region dominated by European farmers.\(^{542}\)

During the early 1660s, Dutch colonists on the Upper Hudson Valley tried to repair the alliance with their Mohawk “brothers” by acting as mediators in the wars between the Mohawks and the various Algonquian peoples from New England. Dutch motivations for doing so were purely practical and not motivated by any sympathetic feelings for the Mohawks. The Dutch only assumed a role as mediators because they were driven by the desire to reinvigorate the Beverwijck trade and because New England officials, who had become irritated by the Mohawk raids in their region, pressured them to do so. From 1660 to 1664, Dutch mediators held several conferences with Mohawks and “Northern Indians” at Fort Orange. In the spring of 1664, two Dutch go-betweens even accompanied several Mohawk envoys to the New England Indians to broker a truce.

\(^{542}\) Van Laer, “Historic Letter,” 28 (quotation). An interesting discussion of the image of Van Curler in history is provided by Merwick, Possessing Albany, 59-67. For Van Curler and other Schenectady colonists as land-investors and farmers, see Burke, Mohawk Frontier, chapter 2.
Despite their efforts, Dutch mediators were unsuccessful and the Mohawk-New England Indian wars continued.\textsuperscript{543}

Although they had the required linguistic and cultural expertise, the Dutch go-betweens failed because they were not really interested in building and nurturing diplomatic alliances with Indian peoples in the region. Dutch officials and negotiators, whose functions often overlapped in Fort Orange and Rensselaerswijck, were narrowly concerned with the maintenance of cross-cultural trade. In contrast to Brazil, where the Dutch established strategic alliances with the native peoples against the Portuguese, Dutch colonists at the Upper Hudson Valley primarily viewed their Mohawk neighbors as practical trading partners. The Dutch sincerely wanted to bring an end to the Mohawk-Algonquian wars in order to restore trade, but they were not interested in becoming permanent peacekeepers or mediators among the various Indian peoples. While their French and English neighbors viewed native peoples as possible allies in their quest for empire in North America, the Dutch in New Netherland viewed their relations with native peoples predominately through the lens of trade.\textsuperscript{544}

Because of the Dutch unwillingness to become serious mediators, the Mohawks were disappointed in their Dutch “brothers.” It is therefore not surprising that the


\textsuperscript{544} A similar argument has been made by Jennings, Ambiguous Iroquois Empire, 124.
Mohawks did not aid the Dutch when the English conquered New Netherland in the late summer of 1664. In September 1664, three Mohawk and four western Iroquois leaders made a treaty of friendship with the new English governor Richard Nicolls at Albany, as Fort Orange and Beverwijck were now named. Significantly, during the negotiations, the Mohawks requested that Nicolls act as a mediator between the Mohawks and their Algonquian neighbors. Although the English would themselves only become experienced negotiators in the mid-Atlantic region during the 1670s, the eagerness of the Mohawks to abandon their Dutch “brothers” and embrace the English revealed the shallowness of the Mohawk-Dutch alliance.545

Paradoxically, Dutch residents of Albany and Schenectady continued to serve as influential negotiators and interpreters between the Mohawks and colonial New York officials throughout the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-centuries. Without the aid of skilled Dutch go-betweens like Arent van Curler, Peter Schuyler, Robert Sanders, and Arnout and Cornelis Viele, colonial New York authorities were unable to maintain strategic diplomatic relations with the Mohawks and the other Iroquois peoples. The Mohawks considered Van Curler’s role as mediator so important that they even used the term “Corlaer,” an alternate Dutch spelling of his name, as a ceremonial name for all New York governors during the colonial period. However, for all their close interactions

545 DRCHSNY, 3: 67-68 (1664 conference). See also Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 130; Trelease, *Indian Affairs*, 228. When New York was re-occupied by the Dutch from 1673-1674, the Mohawks simply renewed their “covenant” with the Dutch. See DRCHSNY, 13: 479-480. Similarly, when New York became permanently under English control in the fall of 1674, the Mohawks again did not aid their Dutch “brothers” but instead quickly restored relations with the English. The architect of the English diplomatic strategy toward the Iroquois after 1674 was Sir Edmund Andros, who was governor of New York from 1674 to 1677 and again from 1678 to 1681. For Andros and the Iroquois, see Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, chapter 8; and Stephen Saunders Webb, *1676: The End of American Independence* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), book three.
with the Mohawks, the Dutch mediators in English service continued to keep their social and cultural distance from the Mohawks. Like Van Curler, many of the later Dutch go-betweens were prominent colonists who sought social status in colonial society rather than among the Mohawks. In contrast to the Great Lakes region where not a few Frenchmen lived among Algonquian villages and eventually formed métis or mixed families, Dutch mediators remained members of the Dutch communities of Albany and Schenectady. In addition, Dutch go-betweens, like their English counterparts, often used their close relations with the Mohawks to obtain lands from them.546

The contradictory character of the Mohawk-Dutch relationship was perhaps best illustrated by the conflicting Mohawk responses to Van Curler’s death. In the summer of 1667, Van Curler drowned in Lake George during a sudden storm, while traveling to French officials in Montreal on behalf of New York authorities. A Mohawk man who had accompanied Van Curler in his canoe testified to Dutch officials that Van Curler drowned because he could not swim. Upon hearing of the news of Van Curler’s death, a delegation of Mohawks visited Van Curler’s residence in Schenectady to offer their condolences. According to the Dutch interpreters who accompanied the Mohawks, the Indians “bewail his death [saying] that they are sorry that he, who so long resided in this country and ruled in this region, should have perished.” The Mohawk visitors also told the Dutch that “there will doubtless come another chief, but they expect that he will not rule so well.”

To indicate that they mourned the loss of Van Curler the Mohawks finally distributed “24 hands of seawan [sewant]” among the assembled colonists.547

While the Mohawks commemorated Van Curler in their relations with the Dutch as a close friend, a later oral tradition circulating among the Mohawks revealed that their memories were not entirely positive. Ever since the early 1640s, many Mohawks had regarded the Dutch mediator with some suspicion, not least because he had asked them to release their French captives. In January 1666, Van Curler again angered the Mohawks by providing food and shelter to an invading French army. The French soldiers had attacked Mohawk villages, but they then got lost in a snowstorm and arrived at Schenectady. To the dismay of the Mohawks, Van Curler allowed the French troops to enter Schenectady. The Mohawks later developed an oral tradition of his death that differed from the version they had told the Dutch officials. According to this later account, Van Curler perished because he had insulted spirit beings that lived in the waters of Lake George. By remembering Van Curler as a person who ridiculed Iroquois traditions, the Mohawks emphasized the large cultural divide that separated them from their Dutch neighbors.548


548 Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 24 (story of Van Curler insulting the spirit beings), 103 (aid to French expedition). Richter speculates that the Mohawks may even have assassinated Van Curler because of his aid to the French, see *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 104. However, the testimony of the Mohawk man to Dutch officials shortly after Van Curler’s death is too detailed to be a cover up. Moreover, several Dutchmen who accompanied Van Curler on his expedition to Montreal never stepped forward to indicate that their companion was murdered by Mohawks. See Van Laer, “Documents,” 31.
8. Conclusion

There were several similarities and differences between the mediators employed by Dutch colonial officials and those used by Indian communities. Neither side often relied on women as official go-betweens. Although women were active participants in the frontier exchange economy, both the Indians and the Dutch considered diplomacy to be an exclusively male activity. The only exceptions were Sara Kierstede and Trientje Evertsen, and even they were kept under close Dutch supervision when they performed their services. Another similarity is that both sides frequently relied on people of some social and political standing to function as mediators. While the company government also made use of capable interpreters and mediators who came from the lower ranks of colonial society, Dutch officials preferred to work with mediators who had some social status and who had experience as public officials. This was especially the case during the two Esopus wars, when Stuyvesant heavily relied on the intercultural skills of prominent colonists like Govert Loockermans and Pieter Wolphertsz Van Couwenhoven. Algonquian and Iroquoian peoples often made use of specially designated spokesmen or civil chiefs when dealing with the Dutch.

Both sides made only minimal use of individuals of mixed descent. Although intimate relations between Indian women and Dutch men were frequent and widespread, there are only three documented Mohawk-Dutch persons who functioned as mediators. Since the Indians and the Dutch generally distrusted each other, children born out of intercultural liaisons were often viewed with suspicion by both sides. It is significant that all three mediators of Mohawk-Dutch descent identified themselves as either Indian or colonist; no one claimed a hybrid status.
Mediators played important roles in the cessation of Kieft’s War and the two Esopus Wars in New Netherland. However, the negotiators were only successful in bringing the two sides together after devastating Dutch attacks on native villages and food supplies forced the Indians to make peace. Although there were several colonial go-betweens, such as David de Vries and Claes de Ruijter, who were sincerely committed to maintaining peaceful relations, they were unable to remove the strong sense of distrust that the Algonquian peoples of the Lower Hudson Valley felt toward the Dutch. The fact that native mediators played such an influential role in the three Indian-Dutch conflicts illuminates the large cultural divide between the two sides.

At the same time, Native American negotiators did not form a disinterested third party committed to bringing about a greater understanding between Dutch and Indian societies. When the Mohawks and Susquehannocks intervened in Kieft’s War, they did so to increase their political influence over smaller neighboring native peoples and to improve their own relations with the Dutch who supplied them with valuable trade goods. The Mohawks were driven by similar selfish motivations when they dispatched Mohawk and Mahican mediators to the Esopus region. Likewise, by acting as go-betweens in the second Esopus War, the Algonquian leaders Oratamin and Mettano were able to maintain friendly relations with the Dutch colonial government and to prevent their small communities from being driven from their lands by the growing colonial population. For all their close interactions with the colonial officials, Oratamin and Mettano used cross-cultural diplomacy to keep the Dutch at arm’s length.

Although colonial and native go-betweens maintained the mutually advantageous Dutch-Mohawk relationship on the Upper Hudson Valley, mediators from both sides held
irreconcilable views of the intercultural alliance. The Mohawks on several occasions attempted to use the Dutch as a subordinate ally. When the Mohawks experienced a brief period of military successes, thanks to the use of Dutch firearms, Mohawk go-betweens frequently bullied Dutch officials into supplying them with food and trade goods, “otherwise the Christians might just as well go back over the great water.” After their Algonquian enemies forced them on the defensive, Mohawk negotiators angrily demanded more active support from their Dutch neighbors. For their part, Dutch mediators primarily viewed the Mohawks as valuable trading partners, but not much more. Colonial go-betweens only interacted with the Mohawks to ensure the continuous flow of beaver pelts to the Dutch. The failure of Dutch and Mohawk negotiators to reconcile their differences became especially pronounced during the English conquest of New Netherland in 1664. Even though they had been the most important Indian allies of the Dutch in mid-Atlantic North America, the Mohawks eagerly established a treaty of friendship with the English soon after Stuyvesant surrendered New Netherland.

Indian and Dutch mediators in New Netherland managed contradictory relations. They sincerely tried to stop Dutch-Indian violence and to preserve peace between the two cultures. Mediators of both sides traveled back and forth, held formal councils, and exchanged wampum belts. At the same time, native and colonial mediators were unwilling to establish a middle ground in which each culture accommodated the other’s interests. Dutch and Indian mediators remained firmly connected to their own cultures and only dealt with each other when and if it suited their needs.  

CONCLUSION

This comparative study of intercultural mediators in New Netherland and Dutch Brazil contributes to recent scholarship in several ways. First, the comparative approach shows that the context of Dutch settlement in each colony fundamentally shaped cross-cultural interactions. In Brazil, the WIC established control over the lucrative sugar growing regions of the northeast that had been cultivated by Portuguese colonists and worked by African and Indian slaves since the late sixteenth century. Since the Catholic Portuguese colonists viewed the Protestant Dutch as heretical invaders, the WIC was drawn into a protracted war with the Portuguese and their Indian and Afro-Brazilian allies that only ended after the Dutch surrendered Recife in January 1654. Dutch relations with the Tupis and the Tarairius in Brazil were therefore primarily shaped by the Company’s interest in the sugar industry and its need for military allies against the Portuguese.

In New Netherland, intercultural relations were determined by an entirely different context. The Dutch were initially attracted to the mid-Atlantic region of North America to obtain beaver pelts and other valuable animal hides from local native peoples. After the founding of the WIC in 1621, New Netherland became a marginal colony within the Company’s Atlantic empire. Because New Netherland lacked a valuable cash crop and the WIC spent most of its resources on the conquest of Brazil and slave stations in West Africa, the Dutch colonization of North America proceeded slowly. Although the
English and Swedes were also interested in the colonization of the mid-Atlantic region of North America, the Dutch were the only European colonial power in the strategic Hudson Valley until the English conquest of 1664. Except for the Delaware Valley and Long Island, Indian-Dutch relations in New Netherland therefore developed without much interference from other Europeans.

For their part, the native peoples of Dutch Brazil and New Netherland responded to the Dutch in different ways. In Brazil, many of the Tupi-speaking peoples viewed the Dutch as allies against the Portuguese. However, the Tupis and their leaders resisted attempts by colonial officials and Calvinist missionaries to integrate them as docile Christian laborers in the colonial order. Likewise, the Tarairius also tried to use the Dutch for their own benefit. Nhanduí and other Tarairiu leaders repeatedly asked the WIC to supply troops for the Tarairiu struggle against their native enemies. Although these attempts were for the most part unsuccessful, the Tarairius demonstrated that they had their own thoughts about the Dutch alliance. In New Netherland, the Algonquian- and Iroquoian-speaking peoples similarly hoped to exploit the Dutch to their own advantages. The Indians of New Netherland were particularly interested in obtaining valuable trade goods such as steel tools, clothes, and guns from the Dutch. At the same time, the Indians kept the Dutch at arms’ length to preserve their cultural, religious, and political independence.

A second contribution of this dissertation is that it corrects several scholarly views of Dutch attitudes toward Indians in New Netherland. Some historians of intercultural relations in New Netherland have argued that the Dutch were only driven by commercial pursuits. By comparing New Netherland with Dutch Brazil I have shown that the Dutch
were also sincerely interested in the conversion of native peoples. In contrast to New Netherland, the Dutch Reformed Church established an extensive missionary program in Dutch Brazil. The large discrepancy between evangelization attempts in Brazil and New Netherland was a result of the Dutch Calvinist ideological struggle against the Catholic Church. Since Jesuits had already converted large numbers of Brazilian Indians, Dutch Calvinists saw it as a challenge to bring the Brazilians to the “true Christian faith.”

Moreover, by taking a comparative perspective, this dissertation demonstrates that the Dutch did not only view native peoples as trading partners. In Dutch Brazil, the WIC heavily relied on the Tupis and Tarairius as military allies. This dissertation also complicates the frequently used scholarly argument that the Dutch in New Netherland were uninterested in establishing close and intimate relations with Indians. By focusing on the cultural interactions between the Dutch and Indians, I show that the Dutch were often in close contact with the natives in both colonies. A considerable number of colonists, soldiers, and WIC officials entered into intimate liaisons with native women.

Finally, this study supports and builds upon current scholarship about cultural brokers. As recent historians such as James Merrell have concluded about intercultural negotiators in eighteenth century British North America, almost all go-betweens in Dutch Brazil and New Netherland remained loyal to their own cultures. For all their close interactions and their abilities to cross cultural boundaries, mediators in Dutch Brazil and New Netherland were not “people in between” who blended cultures. Nearly all mediators identified themselves as either “colonist” or “Indian”.

This unbridgeable cultural divide became quickly apparent when Dutch navigators and traders attempted to establish communication with the Indian peoples of
northeastern Brazil and mid-Atlantic North America in the early 1600s. Initial attempts to communicate through sign language were quickly abandoned, partly because gestures easily led to misunderstandings, but also because each side distrusted the other’s intentions. Subsequent Dutch experiments with linguistic middlemen -- such as Atlantic Creoles of African descent and a Sephardic Jew -- were also soon ended, because the Dutch doubted the loyalties of these foreigners. Although the Atlantic Creoles are often portrayed as people with fluid identities who could change their allegiances depending on the circumstances, there is no evidence that individuals like Mathieu da Costa and Juan Rodriguez were ever much trusted by either colonists or Indians. 550

Following the failed experiments with sign language and linguistic middlemen, the Dutch resorted to the training of Native Americans as interpreters. This was a controversial yet common practice used by other European colonial powers during the era of overseas exploration. In New Netherland, the Dutch attempt to educate natives as useful translators and mediators failed because the Indians refused to cooperate once they returned to their kinsmen in North America. As a result, the Dutch were forced to adapt

to the languages and diplomatic customs of the Indians in order to maintain cross-cultural relations.

In contrast to New Netherland, some Brazilian Indians actively supported the Dutch program to educate them as interpreters. A faction of the Tupi-speaking Potiguar peoples from northeastern Brazil actually persuaded a visiting Dutch fleet to take a small group of them to the United Provinces in 1625. By traveling to the Dutch Republic, these Potiguar envoys solidified an anti-Portuguese alliance with their new, powerful allies. When the Potiguar diplomats returned to Brazil, they quickly became prominent mediators between the WIC and the Tupi peoples. Several of them, such as Pieter Poty and Anthonio Paraupaba became influential go-betweens and were rewarded with prestigious material gifts and political positions by the Dutch colonial government. However, Poty and Paraupaba never abandoned their identities as Potiguars. The two Indian leaders persistently used their influence among WIC authorities to further the autonomy of their kinsmen who were allied with the Dutch.

In one important respect though, Poty and Paraupaba did develop new identities. The two native mediators increasingly asserted identities as pan-Indian leaders who wanted to unite not only their own Potiguar kinsmen but also other “Brazilians” into an alliance with the Dutch against the Portuguese. Poty and Paraupaba skillfully used their privileged position as influential leaders with direct access to WIC officials to obtain more political power than other Tupi headmen. However, Poty’s and Paraupaba’s transformation from Potiguar spokesmen into pan-Indian leaders was an affirmation of the growing divide between Indians and colonists in Brazil. The two Potiguar mediators emerged as pan-Indian leaders in order to protect all Brazilians against colonial
exploitation from not only the Portuguese but also from their Dutch allies. Poty and Paraupaba ultimately failed to unite all Brazilians under their leadership, because the Portuguese drove the Dutch from Brazil. Paradoxically, Poty’s and Paraupaba’s rise as pan-Indian leaders who propagated Brazilian autonomy and unity from colonial rule was dependent on their alliance with the WIC.

No pan-Indian leaders emerged among the native spokesmen and diplomats in New Netherland. The various Algonquian and Iroquoian mediators continued to identify themselves as Mohawks, Susquehannocks, Mahicans, Raritans, or as members of any of the other indigenous polities of mid-Atlantic North America. In contrast to colonial Brazil, where the Portuguese had already colonized most of the coastal Tupi peoples by the time of the WIC invasions, the various Algonquian and Iroquoian peoples of New Netherland were still politically and culturally independent when the first Dutch navigators and traders arrived. Moreover, most native peoples in mid-Atlantic North America were able to maintain their autonomy because the colony of New Netherland lacked the demographic and economic resources to supplant the Indian populations. Although the Indian peoples experienced a dramatic population decline due to epidemic diseases, and practically all native communities became materially dependent upon cross-cultural trade, most Indian peoples in New Netherland were able to maintain their political independence throughout the period of Dutch rule.

Despite the absence of a burgeoning pan-Indian identity that defined itself in opposition to the colonists, the native peoples of New Netherland increasingly kept their Dutch neighbors at arms’ length. Indian misgivings about the Dutch became especially apparent in everyday encounters in the informal frontier exchange economy. Colonists
who were engaged in an intense economic competition to obtain valuable animal pelts and wampum from the natives often physically assaulted Indian visitors. In addition, the continuing sale of liquor to eager native customers often led to intercultural incidents and protests by angry Indian headmen. Finally, different conceptions of land ownership frequently led to conflicts between Indians and colonists.

Although both sides attempted to resolve the problems of physical abuse, liquor trade, and land sales through diplomacy, conflicting attitudes about treaty making and justice often led to wars between Dutch colonists and Algonquian peoples. Although colonists and Indians made use of experienced negotiators who were familiar with each other’s languages and cultural customs, Dutch authorities never supported the creation of a middle ground of shared meanings and symbols to overcome cultural misunderstandings. Instead, officials such as Kieft and Stuyvesant continued to impose early modern Dutch notions of treaty making and diplomacy on the Indians. When the Algonquian peoples did not adhere to these notions the Dutch felt betrayed and used excessive violence against the native peoples. These wars taught the Algonquians that the Dutch could be ruthless and should be kept at a cultural distance.

Mohawk-Dutch relations on the Upper Hudson Valley were not marred by open hostilities because colonists and local authorities were realistic enough to understand their material dependency upon the nearby Indians who supplied them with valuable animal pelts. Likewise, the Mohawks heavily relied on the Dutch for access to trade goods, such as firearms, lead, and clothes. Both sides were therefore careful not to rupture the valuable relationship. Despite this mutual understanding, each side continued to view the other with suspicion. This wary attitude became especially clear among the
Mohawk and Dutch negotiators who frequently visited each other’s villages. Mohawk diplomats were frustrated that the Dutch refused to more actively support them in their wars against the Algonquians and French. Moreover, the Mohawks were unpleasantly surprised by the persistent efforts of Dutch go-betweens to ransom and aid Frenchmen that had been captured by the Mohawks.

The small number of persons of mixed parentage also demonstrated the unwillingness of Indians and Dutch colonists to establish a middle ground on the Upper Hudson Valley. Although intimate relations between Indians and colonists were frequent and widespread, no community of métis developed among the Mohawks or the Dutch. Those persons born of Mohawk mothers and Dutch fathers became either colonist or Indian, not something in between. Canaquese, or Smits Jan, fully identified as a Mohawk, despite his Dutch father and despite his close relations with Dutch colonists. The only exceptions to this pattern were Hilletie and Jacques van Slijck. These two Mohawk-Dutch siblings had been raised by their Mohawk mother but soon changed their identities to become colonists when they had reached young adulthood. To change identities is not to become “people in between.” By relocating to the colonial Dutch community of Beverwijck/Albany, Hilletie and Jacques were forced to behave and identify as colonists.

The large cultural divide between Indians and colonists in Dutch Brazil and New Netherland had eventually dramatic repercussions, when both Dutch colonies were conquered by European powers. After Dutch Brazil fell to the Portuguese in 1654 and almost all Dutch colonists evacuated the colony, the Tupi allies of the WIC felt betrayed and abandoned by the Dutch. The Indian mediators Paraupaba and Carapeba traveled to the Republic in a desperate attempt to persuade metropolitan Dutch authorities to provide
vital military and material aid to the Tupis in their war for survival against the Portuguese. However, because the WIC occupation of Brazil had become a financial disaster and political embarrassment for the Dutch, the States-General was non-committal with the two Indian mediators. Although Paraupaba and Carapeba were personally given shelter and provisions during their stay in the Republic, the Dutch refused to provide further support to their steadfast Indian allies in Brazil.

While the Dutch abandoned their Indian allies after the Portuguese (re)conquest of northeastern Brazil, in New Netherland the Indian peoples abandoned the Dutch following the English conquest of 1664. The inability of Dutch and Indian mediators to negotiate a firm and close alliance was clearly demonstrated when the Algonquian and Iroquoian peoples of mid-Atlantic North America quickly established treaties of friendship with the English conquerors. Although the Indians continued to barter foodstuffs, wampum, and beaver furs for trade items with the Dutch colonists who remained in New York after 1664, the two sides kept their social and cultural distance from each other throughout the colonial period.

In comparing intercultural mediators in Dutch Brazil and New Netherland, this dissertation demonstrates the value of the comparative approach. By taking a broader Atlantic perspective, it shows that the context of Dutch colonialism in each region played an important role in shaping Dutch-Indian relations. Moreover, despite their different responses to the Dutch, the native peoples in Brazil and New Netherland shared the goal of maintaining independence. The comparative analysis also complicates commonly held views of Dutch policies and attitudes toward Native Americans. Contrary to traditional assertions that depict the Dutch as solely driven by material exchange, this dissertation
shows that Dutch-native interactions in the Atlantic world were more diverse and also shaped by religious and imperial motives. Finally, this study of mediators in two different colonies reveals that the go-betweens did not bring the Indians and Dutch colonists closer together. Although Dutch and Indian negotiators often crossed cultural boundaries to maintain alliances or to prevent bloodshed, the mediators did not create a middle ground of shared symbols and practices. By taking a comparative perspective this dissertation shows the complexities of Dutch-Indian relations in the Atlantic world.
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