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ALMOST A DUTCH AUSTRALIA: DUTCH PLANS FOR THE WEST COAST OF NEW HOLLAND IN THE 1820s

His Highness invites you to consider whether it would not be expedient that the Indian administration, following in the footsteps of what has been done with regard to New Guinea, be left free to establish a settlement on New Holland.

The Secretary of State to the Minister of Colonial
Affairs, Brussels,
21 October 1828.¹

A Dutch settlement on New Holland? As will become clear in this article, King Willem I of The Netherlands went even further than this.² His intentions regarding western New Holland, as Australia was still called at the time, seem hard to understand. After having been subject to the prohibitions of Napoleon's Continental System, in 1814 The Netherlands regained its independence in an impoverished state. There had been no profit from the colonies, of which the most important – the Netherlands-Indies – was conquered and held 'in custody' by the British in order to prevent its French occupation. The merchant fleet was in bad shape and the Dutch trading houses were hardly capable of competing with their much cheaper operating British peers. Small Holland could hardly bear the expenses of rebuilding its still vast empire in the West- and East-Indies. In spite of treaties, the Dutch had to fence off their British rivals in the Indonesian archipelago, in terms of territory and trade. Last but not least, the tendency towards

French-inspired direct and centralised rule in the Netherlands-Indies by Batavian Republic governor Herman Willem Daendels, and his successor Thomas Stamford Raffles, had caused great unrest, especially in the central Javanese principalities. Disappointed pretender to the throne, Prince Diponegoro, decided to get rid of the Dutch. The ensuing Java War (1825–30) lasted for five years, cost more than two hundred thousand lives and, of course, a lot of money.³

So why would this financially burdened Dutch government be prepared to bear the expenses of a settlement in New Holland? In 1828, the ‘Commissioner for the possession-taking of the west coast of New Guinea’, A.J. van Delden, executed his assignment, in the name of the king. As if New Guinea was not enough, the archives reveal Willem’s plans with New Holland. In my previous article for *The Great Circle*, I concluded that, with the tentative success of the New Guinea annexation, apparently the Dutch got the taste of it and directed their attention to New Holland.⁴ This connection implies that the reasons for the interest in both territories were about the same. That is not the case. The renewed Dutch interest in New Holland had a reason of its own, although it overlapped with some of the motives behind the maritime investigative assignments to the Moluccas and New Guinea.

Dutch encounters with (Western) Australia

Not long after the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, VOC) established itself in Bantam (West Java) and the Moluccas, its governors were determined to find out more about New Guinea and the mystical Southland.⁵ In 1606, the crew of the *Duyfken* (Little Dove) made the first recorded contact with First Peoples along Australia’s northern shore, thinking they were still in New Guinea. Back in the Moluccas, Captain Willem Jansz reported that the ‘dark barbarous men’ had prevented him from finding out what was produced or desired in the areas he visited.⁶ After all, he was sent on his mission by a trading company.

Australia’s west coast was accidentally encountered in 1616 by Dirk Hartogh, when he sailed the faster southern ‘Brouwer’ route from the Cape of Good Hope to Java, making use of the strong western winds in the Roaring Forties.⁷ After more ships hit that coast, sometimes literally, the VOC decided to investigate. However, the ensuing voyage

sailed along the north coast only, putting some new names like Arnhem Land and Groote Eylandt on Dutch maps, never to reach the west coast.

In the years that followed, new stretches of the west coast of Australia were gradually explored. In 1621, in the course of a journey about which almost nothing else is known, the ship *Leeuwin* (Lioness) reached the cape which still bears its name and marks the most south westerly point of the Australian continent. In 1627 *'t Gulden Seepaert* (the Gilded Sea Horse), seriously off course, made use of the opportunity and explored an area of the south coast of Australia up to just beyond 133° east longitude.⁸ Again with the aim to find out if there was something worth trading for, the industrious VOC Governor-General Anthony van Diemen sent more parties to the South in the 1630s and 1640s, two of which were commanded by Abel Tasman. He also failed to find any trading opportunities during his voyages.⁹

Australia's west coast finally received proper attention by the expedition of Willem de Vlamingh. Commanding his ship also named after a bird species, *Geelvinck* (Yellow Finch), he arrived at Rottnest Island on 29 December 1696. On 13 January 1697 his small fleet of three ships left the Swan River area heading north, charting the coast for 39 days. During this journey, the expedition found the pewter plate left behind in 1616 by Hartogh, on the island that still bears his name.¹⁰ De Vlamingh's expedition was a true voyage of discovery, commissioned from The Netherlands and the only one wholeheartedly supported by the VOC governing board.¹¹

After De Vlamingh's journey, the Dutch lost their interest in the Southland.¹² It is maybe puzzling that this enormous continent just south of the Indonesian archipelago, even baptized 'Nieuw Holland' by them, was ignored by the Dutch in the following century. It was related to the fact that the entrance of the Torres Strait was missed, which from the north is difficult to sail into anyway. The second passage through the south-eastern entrance after Torres was reserved for James Cook in 1770. Before that date, maps show New Guinea and Nieuw Holland as a united land mass. Navigating along the continent's coasts, the Dutch had mostly seen barren, uninviting shores. All Dutch expeditions to Nieuw Holland were, in fact, 'disappointing'. De Vlamingh's voyage was no exception. Not much was added to the 1605 *Duyfken* report that the discovered land had 'nothing of value for trade ... only dry infertile

coast without fresh water, inhabited by uncivilised people. No gold, only sand'.¹³ Further explaining the Dutch lack of interest was the fact that many territories, costly to manage, were already in their possession. Lastly, compared to the seventeenth century, Dutch trade and economy in the eighteenth showed 'lesser energy' and went downhill, symbolised by the bankruptcy of the VOC at the end of that century.¹⁴ The company had gone through a long process of declining returns on investments. Corruption was rife. The loss of money and ships as a result of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch war signed its death warrant.¹⁵ However, British ventures at the Australian coasts forced the Dutch to turn their attention east and southwards from Java again.

British-Dutch rivalry in the East Indies

In the early seventeenth century, a fierce competition between Dutch and British developed in the East Indies. It may be regarded as a prelude to the North Sea naval battles the two seafaring nations fought in the second half of the century. After attempts by the British East India Company (EIC) failed to establish, together with the VOC, a duopoly on the spice production and trade in the Moluccas, in 1623 it withdrew from the eastern part of the archipelago.¹⁶ It was far into the eighteenth century before the British once again dared to venture in the eastern waters.

After the British had opened a trading post in Canton in 1699, navigation to China rapidly increased in the eighteenth century, particularly in the second half. The natural riches of the Indonesian archipelago were in very high demand in China. According to Alexander Dalrymple, one of the British empire builders at the time, the EIC should therefore have direct access to them. However, as the Dutch were kept out of Bengal – conquered by the British in 1757 – the Dutch administration in Batavia was of the opinion that all British trade in the East Indies archipelago had to be prevented. Indeed, any contact between Britons and the local population was undesirable. Even in the use of shipping lanes, restrictions were imposed on the British. Only after the Paris Peace Treaty of 1784 were their vessels given the right of free passage through the entire archipelago.¹⁷

Men like Dalrymple were influenced by the new Enlightenment economic thinking of philosophers like Adam Smith. Opposed to the

hitherto common mercantilist practices of exclusion and protectionism, they promoted total free trade.¹⁸ Another supporter of free trade was Raffles. After the Low Countries were occupied by the French, in 1811 the British captured the Dutch East Indies. Relatively young Raffles was appointed governor-general. Being fully aware of the economic potential of the Indian islands, he opposed their return to the Dutch after Napoleon's defeat. Raffles was no friend of the Dutch. He shipped Javanese cultural artefacts to London, to prove to the people of England that the Javanese were not 'savages'. 'He also brought back some instruments of torture used by Java's former – and later – colonial masters, to show that the Dutch were'.¹⁹ This did not automatically earn him the support of his employer, the EIC. Raffles spent too much money and was criticized for making self-willed decisions out of line, such as abolishing slavery.

Raffles also got himself into trouble because, after the Indies were handed back to the Dutch, he continued to challenge Dutch authority. In 1818, Raffles was appointed resident of Bencoolen. He used it as a base to travel to the east and forged contracts with local rulers in the Palembang area. This infuriated the Dutch, and his bosses in Calcutta and London were not amused. They called Raffles back to Calcutta, where he had to promise to mend his ways. But while in India, he received the assignment to look for a possible new trading post at the southern tip of the Malay peninsula, for the benefit of the India-China trade route.²⁰ The rest is Singaporean history.

Singapore developed rapidly and increasingly drew trade away from the western archipelago, much to the chagrin of the Dutch. They had to struggle hard anyway to maintain control in their eastern empire. 'Disciplinary expeditions' against local rulers were sent in all directions.²¹ Alongside Raffles, many others regretted the fact that the British had relinquished the territories seized from the Dutch. They not only had lost all trading bases in the archipelago, but also had given the Dutch exclusive trade control. Although the latter were not against the principles of free trade, and acted accordingly, they soon found out they were no match for British trade competition. As a result, King Willem and his colonial government started to take protective measures which were not really in accordance, in letter nor in spirit, with the Treaty of London that had accompanied the return of the colonies to the Dutch in

1814. In 1818 Batavia imposed differential import and export duties on foreign traders – primarily British and American – effectively benefitting the Dutch entrepreneurs.²²

This development led to an increase in Anglo-Dutch conflicts and a protracted stop-start round of negotiations to settle matters in the East Indies for once and for all. Meanwhile, British traders started to advocate the need for a new trading post in the Melville Island area. They acted out of resentment against the protectionism of both the Dutch and ‘their own’ EIC, and were afraid that their government would, under Dutch pressure, give up Singapore. Having no bases left in the archipelago, they needed posts as close as possible to the Dutch colonial islands. Supported by empire builder John Barrow of the Admiralty and the Colonial Office, the establishment of a second Singapore in northern Australia seemed a very good idea. Barrow was fascinated by Australia and gave it enormous strategic importance. It shaped the instructions that were given to Phillip Parker King’s extensive marine survey of the northern Australian coast. His discoveries, reports of which came available when the Anglo-Dutch negotiations reached their final stage, were ‘too valuable to go unclaimed’.²³

Foreign Secretary George Canning was mainly interested in obtaining unrestricted access for British traders and used Singapore as a bargaining point. The Dutch were prepared to give up the island, for which in return they demanded exclusive control over trade in all islands to the south. However, it was feared that Batavia would exclude from its ports, through a prohibitive duty, all British ships from New South Wales arriving in ballast in search for return cargo. Preventing this trade would raise the costs of carrying convicts to the Australian colonies enormously. As a consequence, Canning compelled the Dutch to agree to reciprocity of trade and to imposing duties on foreign shipping at a rate not exceeding double that imposed on their own. In return the Dutch could keep their Moluccan spice monopoly, which was declining in value anyway. The Treaty of London was finalised on 17 March 1824.²⁴

Exactly one month before, instructions for Captain Gordon Bremer prepared by Barrow were sent from Colonial Office to the Admiralty. Bremer was to establish a settlement and to take possession of a chunk

of the northern Australian coast.²⁵ It resulted in the construction of Fort Dundas at Melville Island in 1825, another ‘extension of the British Empire’.²⁶ Strategic considerations were dominant and went at the expense of forming a trading base. It was a pre-emptive move that would prevent any plan that the Dutch might have to do the same.²⁷ As a result of the Treaty of London, the British free traders were reassured about Singapore remaining British and quickly lost interest in the new Melville Island port.

In spite of the London Treaty, the success of Singapore made the Dutch increasingly nervous and they feared that a second British base somewhere else at the edge of the archipelago would again take over a large part of potential Dutch trade profits. This fear seemed to materialize when Fort Dundas was built. In the process, formal British possession was taken of the north coast of Australia between 129° and 135° east longitude.²⁸ The Singapore angst was unjustified as the Melville Island settlement lasted only four years, but it set in motion a train of events that eventually led to a similar Dutch settlement in New Guinea. In 1828, Merkus-oord was officially inaugurated on 24 August, the birthday of King Willem. The Dutch were keen to prevent British interference with the Moluccan spice trade and closed the New Guinea back door.²⁹ It was an act of pre-emptive annexation, and by doing so, the Dutch copied the earlier British moves in northern Australia. There, the British had feared that the Dutch could lay claims through prior discovery.³⁰

All his children must contribute to the kingdom’s prosperity

Creating a prosperous society was the goal King Willem repeated annually in the Dutch version of the State of the Union address.³¹ Although he was a constitutional king, he preferably ruled by himself: ‘Le Roi décide seul’.³² He limited parliamentary law-making and budget powers as much as possible. Concerning the colonies there was no need to restrict parliamentary influence: article 60 of the constitution gave him exclusive power over the overseas possessions (Figure 1). The king regarded the nation as his, not the other way around. He demanded agreement and co-operation from all his subjects, including the people’s representatives. The impoverished nation should blossom again and the kingdom was his private company to achieve that.³³



Figure 1: A period portrait (left) and detail (right) highlighting the importance of the Dutch colonies – in this case West Java – to the prosperity of The Netherlands and the reign of King Willem I. Source: Joseph Paelinck, *Willem I*, 1819, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, SK-C-1460.

The attitude towards the subjects in the colonies was extremely paternalistic, but state ideology ruling the Dutch equalled it. The nation was a family and the king ruled as the father of his children. The king had no doubt that his and the nation's interests were the same. Those disobeying and protesting had to be punished and further educated, as naughty children.³⁴ Actually, everybody not contributing to Willem's prosperous society should be treated as such: 'the key words in the renewal of the correctional facilities were moral improvement, discipline and efficiency, the latter especially in the financial sense. Without harming the national industry, the inmates' labour had to benefit the realm and the inmates themselves'.³⁵

Useful subjects, useful prisoners, useful expenditures – in everything, the sovereign's policies breathed the spirit of utilitarianism.³⁶

In the same spirit, the colonies should be beneficial to the 'mother country'. After the British interregnum of the Netherlands-Indies, all King Willem's respective viceroys were influenced by the new

economic and philosophical thinking of their time. The first in line, Godert A.G.P. van der Capellen, finished his studies at Göttingen University in Germany. This university was a centre of Enlightenment ideas. His teachers were influenced by Montesquieu and Adam Smith and published books about European colonialism, in which they promoted enlightened humanitarian policies.³⁷

Consequently, Van der Capellen's rule in the Indies was characterized by rationalism and a Christian-humanitarian morality. Being a representative of a new crop of civil servants, he believed strongly in human progress. For him, education should produce virtuous, rational thinking people, who in the end would accept the superiority of western civilisation and act and behave accordingly. It was envisaged that the 'common Javanese' would break out of his closed village atmosphere and could be lured to improve its welfare by starting to produce lucrative agricultural products for the world market. Suitable education 'would improve their hearts and enlighten somewhat their raw intellect, making them useful members of society'.³⁸

The average Javanese was 'flabby and lazy', Van der Capellen insisted, but good colonial policies would elevate him from his sorry state of barbarism and superstition.³⁹ This idea of 'social engineering' had become common among colonial policy makers. The colonial possessions were to be ruled 'in such a way that it would ensure the highest possible level of prosperity, the most benefit to the trading of the Republic and the most advantage to the State's finances'.⁴⁰ From then on, these three goals formed the core of colonial policy.⁴¹

However, thoughts differed on how to achieve these goals. Van der Capellen's policies were regarded as a financial failure and King Willem lost his patience.⁴² How long did it have to take for the colony to become profitable? In 1825 he appointed commissioner-general Léonard P. J. du Bus de Gisignies, but before he could implement his far-reaching liberal ideas on the reform of the colonial system, he was replaced by Johannes van den Bosch.⁴³

Experiences obtained in the East and West Indies, and in The Netherlands, influenced Van den Bosch's thinking and actions back and forth. Van den Bosch started his career in the East Indies as a military engineer. After resigning in 1808, he bought several thousands of hectares of wasteland near Batavia, which he drained and turned into

wet-rice terraces. In the process, he ‘taught a considerable number of people ... to labour’. They ‘formerly made bad use of their time’ – almost an insult to his belief, like his king, that all men should make their labour as useful as possible.⁴⁴

It was similar to Van der Capellen’s view on the ‘inert native’. After Van den Bosch returned to The Netherlands, he made good use of his time – as he was compelled to do according to his own conviction – to read and think about labour. The core of his ideas was the observation that people living in a customary, traditional environment, would not do work beyond satisfying their basic needs. This impression was applicable to Javanese, but equally to the Dutch poor. No discrimination there. As a consequence, in order to make idle people useful for society, according to Van den Bosch, benign coercion with the aim of increasing their productivity was justified.⁴⁵

Paupers and prisoners

It was a rare geological event linking the East Indies with the Netherlands – and the rest of the world – that induced Van den Bosch to work out an administrative solution to poverty in his country. In 1815, Tambora volcano on Sumbawa Island exploded. Enormous amounts of ash were pushed into the atmosphere, causing two consecutive ‘summers that never were’, crop failures and famines in large parts of the world, including Europe.⁴⁶ In The Netherlands, the widespread poverty caused by the Napoleonic wars deepened. In 1819, more than 22,000 people sought refuge in poorhouses, at a cost of 126 guilders per person per year, half of which was charged to the state treasury. Van den Bosch’s idea was to provide these paupers work and income by having them colonise wastelands in the northeastern part of the country. The name of this private initiative founded in 1818 was the Benevolent Society, headed by Van den Bosch himself and warmly supported by members of the royal family.⁴⁷

Initially welcomed with enthusiasm, the Colonies of Benevolence could not expand because of high costs and disappointingly low income. Van den Bosch was forced to conclude a contract with the state to admit ‘criminal paupers’ (whose poverty and unemployment was their crime) in newly designed institutions. ‘These agricultural colonies, organized around the management of the criminalized [sic]

poor through the economic use of disciplinary force, were a new kind of penal institution.⁴⁸ This development convinced Van den Bosch of the importance of culture in relation to plans to increase productivity. Like Van der Capellen, he believed in the malleability of character and therefore it could be improved by education and better living conditions. He developed the modern conviction that the individual character was the product of circumstances and environment.⁴⁹

King Willem was a supporter of Van den Bosch's poverty alleviation efforts for the (criminalised) poor. Among the many two-word descriptions of Willem given by historians, 'desktop king' would be a justified addition (Figure 2).⁵⁰ From morning into the evening, six days a week, the king read an endless stream of documents presented by his civil servants. Nothing escaped his attention. This included the prison system in The Netherlands. Completely in line with his utilitarian attitude, the prison system should be organized efficiently, meaning at the lowest possible cost. Apparently, after having studied the subject, in



Figure 2: Willem ran his new kingdom like an authoritarian director. Even at his summer palace he worked tirelessly, drawing one royal decree after another. Willem's reconstructed working chamber at Het Loo Palace. Photograph: J. Overweel.

a circular letter His Majesty himself advised the prison boards to serve the inmates two specific kinds of cheap dishes, one being the Rumford Soup.⁵¹

The inhabitants of the kingdom needed to be protected against potential harm by criminals to their safety, and to their possessions. The emerging liberal bourgeoisie was worried about poverty causing social unrest. According to the well-to-do, ‘the moral decay of the rabble’ didn’t help to climb out of poverty.⁵² A number of (charity) institutions, including Van den Bosch’s society, set out on a ‘moral campaign’ to educate the poor. Public interest in those less well-off extended to prisoners. In 1818, a scientific society offered a reward for the best answer to the question how to improve the health of prison inmates. A contribution of a rather judicial nature, therefore not the winner, was used by King Willem, without proper source reference, for his 1821 prison reform. Standards were set for food, clothing and housing for prisoners. However, the official objective of the new system was for the prisons to become self-supporting. To reach this goal, the prisoners were obliged to work, making their own clothes, as well as for the navy and army. Working days ranged from seven hours in winter to thirteen-and-a-half in summer.⁵³

Convicts to the colonies?

It was against the backdrop of prison reform in The Netherlands that the king recalled that the former Commissioner-General Cornelis T. Elout, who had returned from the East Indies, had ideas about ‘making fruitful use of convicts [in the colonies] who, here in the country, still have to remain incarcerated for a good number of years’.⁵⁴ At the king’s behest, the Minister of Colonial Affairs checked with Elout, reluctantly, as he saw nothing in it. In his letter to Elout, the minister already gave a lead by noting that the king’s idea was not really in line with the addressee’s thoughts. After all, these were aimed at ‘protecting and administering’ the Asian population, a goal at odds with sending ‘criminals’ to the colonies.⁵⁵

After this exchange, the subject remained. The debate was generally about the design of the colonial state, and whether there was room for migration of large numbers of Europeans within a liberalised plantation economy. As long as this discussion continued,

no research was done on colonisation by convicts.⁵⁶ The king grew impatient. After all, there was no direct connection between ‘the great question of land ownership in Java’ and sending ‘European convicts’ to another island in the archipelago.⁵⁷ And again, in The Netherlands a discussion on a new corporal punishment code was forthcoming.

On 28 May 1827, the king ordered an enquiry.⁵⁸ The order was forwarded to Batavia, but not without considerations and conditions. The same Cornelis Elout was now Minister of Colonial Affairs. He believed that a ‘colony of criminals’ must meet three conditions. Firstly, there must be ‘healthy air’ and fertile soil.⁵⁹ Further, the area to be colonized had to be uninhabited, so that an Indigenous population was not displaced. Thirdly, there must be no flight risk.

Field work in the tropics by Europeans was generally considered impossible. However, the tropical heat might be tempered by sufficient distance from the equator or by altitude. Therefore, according to Elout, the West Indies were not an option. Moreover, ‘in these possessions there still exists the negro slavery, which makes the imposition of forced labour on whites seem questionable’.⁶⁰ Next, the suitability of New Guinea was considered. It has high mountains. Just over a month earlier, the king had authorized the seizure of part of the island. But that had not happened yet, and besides, the population there was ‘faithless and uncivilized’, noted Elout, who preferred to focus on possibilities in the Moluccan Archipelago. Nevertheless, in the search for a suitable settlement, New Guinea never left the picture.

Elout illustrated the important issue of danger of flight with the Botany Bay example. Surely, this British penal colony was remote and ‘on a tempestuous sea’. But even from there prisoners tried to flee to China, ‘an intention which, through its futility, provides powerful evidence that people of such a stamp are capable of anything’.⁶¹ Elout’s conclusion was that the Moluccan archipelago appeared the only suitable place and apparently remote enough. The search focused on Ceram, Boeroe, Oebi Major [Seram, Buru, Ubi Mayor] and, still, New Guinea.⁶²

Six months later, Batavia received the ministry’s orders. They were forwarded to Pieter Merkus, Governor of the Moluccas. But in Batavia it was known that the Director-General of Finance had

spent extended time in the Moluccas. His name was Charles Mathieu Baumhauer and, in spite of his Moluccan experience, he had his own ideas.

The Baumhauer Report

In 1778, Baumhauer was born in Amsterdam as the second son into a wealthy merchant family. Because of the European political turmoil and ensuing economic decline during the Napoleonic Era, it became very difficult to keep the trading house profitable. It was wound up and Charles decided to make a career move. He became civil servant (third class) for the East Indies. Upon arrival in the colony, Baumhauer was deployed in several financial committees. In 1816 he was appointed secretary of the Committee for the Transfer of the Moluccas.⁶³ He was then promoted to Resident of Banda, before being transferred in 1821 to Java, where in August 1827 he started as Director-General of Finances in Batavia.⁶⁴

After Baumhauer was invited for a meeting to discuss a suitable spot for a convict colony, in preparation he put his thoughts on paper. He had been given a copy of Elout's considerations. Baumhauer's report was dated 23 February 1828. He referred to the three conditions formulated by the minister. After review, Ubi Mayor came out best, but it lacked fresh water. But surely, 'the biggest and most important difficulty' was the flight risk.⁶⁵ Suppose a few hundred detainees escaped or took control of a military post? That would equal the actions of the infamous *fibustier* in the West Indies.⁶⁶ The 'ultimately remote' Botany Bay did not have this drawback. In between his arguments, Baumhauer could not resist giving the British a sneer. Botany Bay was so far away that Bengal, where the British EIC had its Asian administrative seat, would not be bothered by escaped prisoners, but the Dutch East Indies might. Ubi Mayor was crossed out.

New Guinea also stood a chance, but simply too little was known about it. Baumhauer did know that it had high mountains. The coasts were inhabited – in the terminology of the day – 'by true ocean negroes, otherwise called Papuans or woolheads, and the interior by Alfurs'.⁶⁷ Colonisation would require expelling coastal inhabitants. When Baumhauer continued to discuss the inland inhabitants, it was the first time he made a comparison with Australia: 'I believe that it will be the

same with New Guinea as with New Holland, where some inhabitants are found in the interior, but so few that it will not be a problem'.⁶⁸ According to Baumhauer, New Holland was so large that it was quite possible that it boasted the same cool plateaus as Mexico and Manado. His argument now shifted entirely to Australia.

Then New Holland, where the British have given us the example of a colonisation like the one mentioned above [Botany Bay], where such colonisation has risen to a level of perfection of which there is no example yet, that New Holland deserves perhaps more than any other land the attention of the government that wants to remove criminals from its bosom and settle them in a strange and distant part of the world, in order to see these outcasts there gradually return to society. This New Holland, which may be called a world because of its vastness, certainly still offers vast coastal areas and extensive inlands, which have not been visited by the British.⁶⁹

Baumhauer continued by listing the British settlements in north, east, south and finally the west coast of Australia:

Swan River, recently surveyed but not yet occupied. No settlements exist on this entire West Coast, and yet is probably the best and most advantageous for trade and shipping. And it is precisely this West Coast that is putting itself to the forefront for establishing European criminals. Location, air condition, fertility. Yes, everything gives New Holland preference over all other lands, and who can doubt that on such a vast coast as the West Coast there are not many places that meet all conditions.⁷⁰

Baumhauer then asked two questions that he answered himself. The first was whether the British had perhaps already taken official possession of all of New Holland, and second, whether treaties with England might prohibit the establishment of Dutch settlements there. In answer to the first question, no declaration was known to him. The second question was also answered in the negative. Article 6 of the London Treaty only stated that no new settlements may be established without prior authorisation from the respective governments in Europe.

It is clear from the foregoing, in my opinion, that it is only New Holland to which the Government should focus its attention. The favourable position of the West Coast of New Holland in relation to our colonies immediately catches the eye, and from the other side, wouldn't it be extremely advantageous to have some counterweight in these regions against the British? One only considers the rapid growth and prosperity of the British Establishments and one will be convinced that we can share in this prosperity. Your Excellency's enlightened judgement will see the

incalculable benefits of this for our trade and shipping, quite apart from the advantage of being able to bring the outcasts of society to better morals and thereby achieve the goal which all punishments must always seek to promote.⁷¹

Baumhauer ended by stating that further investigation would have to take place into ‘these shores’ and possibly the ‘Papuan Islands’ by a committee of experts.⁷²

Beyond Baumhauer

Baumhauer’s report might have ended in the drawer among other documents expressing imperialist dreams by subordinate civil servants, but that was not the case. Through the ministry his report landed on the king’s desk about seven months after it was written. The accompanying letter was from Lieutenant Governor-General Petrus T. Chassé. He had interviewed Baumhauer and had discussed his report with the Indies’ Council.⁷³ They did not consider themselves capable of giving advice and forwarded the report to Merkus in the Moluccas. They had, however, advice for the future:

If, at a later stage, the Dutch government were to consider establishing a colony of European criminals on one of the coasts of New Holland, the British government would have to be consulted in advance, and the matter would therefore require further preparation by the mutual governments in Europe.⁷⁴

This cautious advice fell on the king’s deaf ears. On 21 October 1828, just five days after he appointed Van den Bosch as the new Governor-General, he asked him (through Elout) whether it wouldn’t be a good idea to create an establishment in New Holland, ‘in the footsteps of what we have done in New Guinea’.⁷⁵ There is no sign that the king had any intention to consult the British about it. Not even after an important change in the situation: just a few months later, it became known that the British government would support a settlement of free colonists in the Swan River area. Because of that, on 19 February 1829, Elout repeated the king’s suggestion concerning New Holland in a communication to Van den Bosch. What would be his advice now? The Swan River colonists would not appreciate a Dutch convict colony nearby. It was not clear yet whether the British wanted to take possession of the whole coast, but it was considered ‘not unlikely that such will be the consequence of the arrival of the Governor Stirling, who recently

left England with officials and supplies for the new colony'.⁷⁶ As long as this did not happen, there was a 'lot of coast left' between the Swan River mouth at 32° South and Cape Van Diemen at 11° South. In his response of 27 April, Van den Bosch indicated he wanted to give his thoughts on the matter only after he arrived in the Indies.

One day later, Elout reminded King Willem that the British would object to a Dutch settlement on the same coast, even more so against 'a colony of criminals ... not really a settlement of a similar nature to Swan River'. In any case, if the coast was not completely British,

it might be sensible for us to make an effort to preserve our rights to that part which they have not yet declared in their possession ... independent of the decision whether or not a colony of criminals will be established there.⁷⁷

The new developments did not discourage the king and following his minister's advice, on 7 May he replied to the Minister for the Navy and Colonies with his final decision on the matter:

In reconciliation with your report of April 28, We authorise you to act according to the proposal therein to the appointed Governor General of the Netherlands East Indies, with regard to the possible taking possession of a part of the West Coast of New Holland, and the related idea of establishing a colony of criminals there.⁷⁸

On the basis of the king's decision (Figure 3), on 2 September Van den Bosch was ordered to further investigate (again!) the possibilities to establish a convict colony 'in any part of our possessions in the East Indies', New Guinea or the West Coast of New Holland, 'with the authority, when judged necessary, to take into possession part of the latter in the name of His Majesty'.⁷⁹ Not much later, Merkus' report finally arrived, two-and-a-half years after the king requested the survey. It was slightly more positive about the feasibility of a convict colony in the Moluccas, on the basis of which Batavia had already ordered a follow-up investigation on 21 February that year. Nevertheless, the New Holland order remained in force. Again, the king showed his impatience, understandable considering the slow communication with the colonies. Van den Bosch was expected to hand in his report as soon as possible.⁸⁰

The archives do not show proof that he did. The new governor-general was busy putting the colonial finances in order by imposing his

Ons vereenigende met Uwe
 Rapport van den 28 April L^{de} J.C.
 N^o: 79, magligen Wij U tot het doen der
 daarbij voorgestelde kennisgeving aan
 den benoemden Gouverneur Generaal van
 Nederlands Indië, in betrekking
 tot het eventueel in besit nemen van
 een gedeelte der Westkust van Nieuw
Holland en het daarmede in verband
 staande denkbeld, om aldaar eene
 Folksplanting van misdadigers te
 vestigen.

Brussel den 7 Mei 1829.

Willem I

Figure 3: Willem I's dispatch of 7 May 1829 authorising the potential establishment of a Dutch colony on the western Australian coast. Source: National Archives of The Netherlands, Ministerie van Koloniën, Openbaar Verbaalarchief ov 2 September 1829 no. 55.

Culture System. We therefore do not know exactly what his thoughts about a western Australian adventure were. Van den Bosch had of course experience with re-educating (criminalised) paupers with his Colonies of Benevolence in The Netherlands. An exchange with Elout in 1828 about a letter passed on by Foreign Affairs only reveals something about his opinion regarding convict colonies in the tropics. The letter was

from the Saxon envoy asking whether the Dutch government would be willing to send Saxon ‘evil-doers, criminals and paupers’ to their overseas colonies. Elout believed that Van den Bosch had not given up the idea of ‘manual labour’ by Europeans in the colonies, but that ‘it would be highly questionable to test it with criminals’.⁸¹ Van den Bosch totally agreed: not with criminals, ‘on the contrary, it will be advisable to designate people accustomed to a working and moderate life, in the first place the youngsters from the institutions of the Benevolent Society’.⁸²

On 24 July 1829 Van den Bosch embarked on his journey to the Indies, arriving in Batavia 2 January 1830.⁸³ Just before his departure, on 2 May, Captain Fremantle formally had taken possession, in the name of King George IV, ‘all that part of New Holland which is not included within the territory of New South Wales’. The Swan River Colony was established in June. George had won the race, unaware he had taken part in it. The British pre-emptive move had been directed against the French, not the Dutch. Among the latter, the colonial officials didn’t care much about it. Soon after the colonists had settled themselves, exemption from export duties for goods from the Netherlands-Indies with destination Perth was requested. It was granted.⁸⁴ At this time, just when the Java War had come to an end, at home the Belgian Revolution started. ‘The Belgian mutinous scum’ subsequently forced King Willem to spend large amounts of money for his military manoeuvres against them.⁸⁵

And Baumhauer? For health reasons he temporarily returned to The Netherlands. He arrived there before Van den Bosch left, so there is a possibility that the two met. After his return to the Indies, his job at Finance was taken over by someone else and Baumhauer was the first official to take up the new position of Commissioner-Inspector for the Outer Possessions, which was all territory outside Java and Madura. The often ‘injudicious actions of young and inexperienced officials’ far away from the administrative centre was the reason for establishing this new position.⁸⁶ Its instructions were, by the way, written by Pieter Merkus, who in his capacity as Governor of the Moluccas had been pivotal in the decision to annex part of New Guinea and to establish Merkus-oord, a failed settlement.⁸⁷

Baumhauer’s new job was considered a demotion.⁸⁸ Apparently, a gift had not led to the desired result. In June 1830, ‘with feelings of

Reference and Esteem having the Honour to call myself Your Excellency's humble Servant', Baumhauer had sent a box of cigars to Van den Bosch, 'having been unable to obtain other ones'. 'However, I fear that the cigars will not live up to expectations. As soon as better ones are brought in, I will try to send them to your Excellency.'⁸⁹

Caused by smoking too many bad cigars or not, Baumhauer had contracted tropical sprue. Back in the Indies his health deteriorated. He died on 9 May 1834, at the age of 55.⁹⁰ Baumhauer could have been the James Cook of Dutch Australia, but he would not have lived to receive the credits for it.

Conclusion

Like New Guinea, Australia could have been half British and half Dutch. In the story of early 19th-century European expansion in this part of the world, connections can be made between the large island and the continent. After New Guinea and New Holland were finally separated on eighteenth-century maps, British-Dutch rivalry induced a series of action-reaction territorial gambits, often bolstered by short-lived settlements to consummate them. The reasons were mainly economic and to a lesser extent strategic. The Dutch defended their protectionist policies in the archipelago and the outdated Moluccan spice monopoly, while the British tried to breach it with 'second Singapores' for attracting local trade.

Willem I's belief that people were malleable made this utilitarian king the driving force behind the idea of sending his criminal, 'misbehaved children' to the colonies. Convict colonies could solve a homeland problem while at the same time contributing to the profitability of the colonies. It went along with generally shared European enlightened ideas that it was possible to re-educate paupers and criminals and make them 'useful'. As a consequence, western Australia came into the picture. Willem's role is the most important, as he alone decided on colonial matters.

His permission to take possession of the Australian west coast underscores some of his character traits as described in his most recent, excellent biography: impatient, opportunistic, if not impulsive and insecure.⁹¹ His policies in pursuing economic growth were often not well thought over. In the midst of the Java War, part of New Guinea was added to the empire's island dominions. Western Australia almost followed suit, based on the very meagre facts presented in the Baumhauer report. After all, in Dutch eyes the New Guinea venture had been a success.

Willem's plans regarding the western Australian coast may have been ill-considered, but the urge to make paupers and criminals useful was a widespread conviction. The British example of establishing a convict colony at Botany Bay clearly inspired Baumhauer and other colonial decision makers. The belief was that it would be benign for the homeland, the newly acquired territory and the convicts themselves. New South Wales 'was a colony that would open up Australia and the Pacific as the Virginia colony had opened up North America', remarks Robert J. King. 'Convicts were sent there to perform the backbreaking work of laying the foundations, in the most literal sense'.⁹² Thomas Townshend, Lord Sydney, driving force behind the colonisation of eastern Australia, had a 'benevolent mind' that had led him 'to conceive this Method of redeeming many Lives that might be forfeit to the offended Laws; but which, being preserved under salutary Regulations, might afterward become useful to Society'. Moreover, 'the Plan presented a Prospect of commercial and political advantage'.⁹³ The similarities with Johannes van den Bosch and his king's thoughts 40 years later are striking.

Colin Forster argues that 'it was primarily the penal interest that directed French attention to Australia'.⁹⁴ Whether this was a correct conclusion or not, the story above shows that for the Dutch it was certainly accurate. It provided a brief revival of Dutch interest in New Holland after it had been ignored for so long. British activities in northern Australia also sparked this attention, but the response there was defensive: protecting economic interests in the Moluccas.

In his ground-breaking study on Dutch whaling in the South seas, Frank Broeze argues that the search for a whaling station for the Indian and Pacific Oceans also brought New Guinea and New Holland to Dutch attention.⁹⁵ Using the same sources cited by Broeze, I could not find proof of this assertion with regard to western New Holland. Whaling did play a role in the interest that developed towards New Guinea, but quickly disappeared into the background. It was the protection of the Moluccan spice monopoly that led to the decision to occupy New Guinea. King Willem's economic opportunism backed these surveys and decisions regarding the eastern Indies seas. Only when discussion started about a suitable spot for a convict colony did western Australia come into the picture. The Moluccas, New Guinea and New Holland were connected to each other when maritime investigative assignments were discussed.

However, a nineteenth-century Dutch maritime survey of the western Australian coasts was never executed.

While occupying western New Guinea, geopolitical considerations were prominent, embedded in Dutch-British rivalry, spanning the whole archipelago from Singapore to northern Australia to New Guinea. It made the seizure of western New Guinea also more urgent compared to the plans for western New Holland. The 1824 London Treaty at least ended mutual irritation about territorial expansionist ambitions of both the British and the Dutch, the latter being much weaker and in a defensive role. The Strait of Malacca became the demarcation line. After the Dutch had added western New Guinea to their archipelago empire, ‘in the neighbourhood’ the vast Australian continent was the last frontier left for territorial ambitions. During the final stages of the London Treaty negotiations, the British decided to annex northern Australia. Baumhauer’s remark that possession of (part of) western Australia would form a counterweight against British (commercial) strength must have pleased King Willem. Out of fear of the French, the British finally occupied the last remaining Australian frontier. They should have feared the Dutch too.

In another article, Broeze rightly notes that how absolutist a sovereign might be, he cannot govern alone. His advisers influence his decisions. Willem’s loyal civil servant Johannes van den Bosch deferred advice on the western Australian plans. Deliberately delaying execution of orders is a means for officials to silently disagree with the decision-maker. Van den Bosch would not be the first or the last to employ this strategy. He did not believe in sending convicts to the colonies.⁹⁶

James Stirling and his colonists – not convicts – started the shared history between European immigrants and the indigenous population of Western Australia. The Dutch did not. Their decision-making process had been too slow. The modern reader tends to forget how slow communications were before the opening of the Suez Canal.⁹⁷ When a request was sent from the colonies, a decision from Europe was not to be expected within six months, let alone when a discussion was started, requiring multiple exchanges back and forth. On 28 May 1827, King Willem I urged Colonial Affairs to investigate the feasibility of a convict colony. Two years later, on 7 May 1829, he authorised the annexation of part of the west coast of Australia. However, he left the final decision to the Governor-General, who did not believe in a convict colony.

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Jeroen Overweel

Endnotes

- 1 National Archives of The Netherlands (NA) no. 2.10.01: *Ministerie van Koloniën 1814–49, Openbaar Verbaalarchief* [MvK ov, Ministry of Colonial Affairs public records], 19 February 1829 no. 60. A ‘verbaal’ is a folder as archival record. Many articles in *The Great Circle* have discussed French interest in Australia. The title of this article is derived from Noelene Bloomfield, *Almost a French Australia*, Halstead Press, 2012.
- 2 To avoid confusion with the British name William, Willem is not translated. His full name was Willem Frederik van Oranje Nassau. As the Northern and Southern Netherlands were merged with the consent of the anti-French allies, it was officially ‘The United Kingdom of The Netherlands’. ‘Holland’ and ‘the Low Countries’ are also used to refer to the country. It was now a unified country under a constitutional monarch, very different from the confederation of united provinces before the Batavian Republic and the French period.
- 3 For a recent study on this subject, see Martin Bossenbroek, *De Wraak van Diponegoro. Begin en Einde van Nederlands-Indië*, Athenaeum, 2020.
- 4 Jeroen Overweel, ‘Keep them Out! Early Nineteenth Century British/Dutch rivalry in Eastern Indonesia and Australia, and the founding of Merkus-oord’, *The Great Circle*, vol. 43, no. 1, 2021, pp. 34–6. The main topic of this article is the Dutch annexation of western New Guinea.
- 5 I use the common (English) spelling of placenames of pre-Indonesian independence times.
- 6 Alan Powell, *Far Country. A Short History of the Northern Territory*, Melbourne University Press, 1982, pp. 28–9.
- 7 R. (Bob) Sheppard, ‘Towards Solving Australia’s Greatest Remaining Maritime Mystery?’ *The Great Circle*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2016, p. 123. That page also includes a quote from the VOC sailing instructions describing the dangers of the coast. In 1617 the VOC made this route obligatory. The Dutch thereafter called the northwest coast ‘The land of Eendragt, named after Hartogh’s ship: Marion Peters, *De Wijze Koopman, Het Wereldwijde Onderzoek van Nicolaes Witsen (1641–1717), Burgemeester en V.O.C.-Bewindhebber van Amsterdam*, Bert Bakker, 2010, p. 68.
- 8 B.J. Slot, *Abel Tasman and the Discovery of New Zealand*, Otto Cramwinckel, 1992, p. 34. In 1628 Gerrit Frederiksz de Witt added further to the knowledge of the northwest coast: *ibid.* p. 35.
- 9 Femme S. Gaastra, ‘The Dutch East India Company: A Reluctant Discoverer’, *The Great Circle*, vol. 19, no. 2, 1997, p. 116. Powell, *Far Country*, pp. 29–32. Later, when Tasman cruelly mistreated a sailor, the VOC did not see it as a loss firing him.
- 10 ‘Willem de Vlamingh: Zeeman en Ontdekkingsreiziger Voor de VOC (Vlieland 1640 – na 1698)’, Museum Tromp’s Huys, <https://trompshuys.nl/willem-de-vlamingh/>. Accessed 30 March 2022.
- 11 See Peters, *De Wijze Koopman*, or the title of her PhD thesis: *Mercator sapiens*.
- 12 *Ibid.*, p. 114. Gaastra, however, describes some exceptions.
- 13 J.P. Sigmond, and L.H. Zuiderbaan, *Dutch Discoveries of Australia. Shipwrecks, Treasures and Early Voyages off the West Coast*, Rigby, 1979, p. 23, quoted in Gaastra, ‘The Dutch East India Company’, p. 115.
- 14 F.W. Stapel, *De Oostindische Compagnie en Australië*, Van Kampen, 1937, p. 149.

- 15 Gaastra, 'The Dutch East India Company', p. 114.
- 16 In 1623 a VOC court had ten British, nine Japanese and one Portuguese executed on grounds of high treason. This 'Amboyna Massacre' was referred to well into the eighteenth century as a warning for the cruelty and untrustworthiness of the Dutch. Christiaan G.F. de Jong, 'Engels-Nederlandse Rivaliteit in de Grote Oost, 1579–1630', <https://www.cgfdejong.nl>, Version 1 November 2015, pp. 1,11.
- 17 Christiaan G.F. de Jong, 'Alexander Dalrymple and Thomas Forrest: Two British Empire Builders at the End of the 18th Century', <https://www.cgfdejong.nl>. Version 1 January 2019, pp. 1,4,14.
- 18 Ibid, pp. 1,2. Overweel, 'Keep Them Out!', p. 21.
- 19 Victoria Glendinning, *Raffles and the Golden Opportunity, 1781–1826*, Profile Books, 2018, pp. 83,136,166,168. Quote from *The Guardian*, 5 December 2012.
- 20 Ibid. p. 170.
- 21 For example Ambon (1817), West Borneo (1823), Southern Celebes (1825), Palembang: Bossenbroek, *De Wraak van Diponegoro*, pp. 179–85,198. Wim van den Doel, *Zo ver de Wereld Strekt. De Geschiedenis van Nederland Overzee vanaf 1800*, Bert Bakker, 2011, pp. 46–8.
- 22 J.M.R. Cameron, 'Traders, Government Officials and the Occupation of Melville Island in 1824', *The Great Circle*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1985, pp. 88–99. Bossenbroek, *De Wraak van Diponegoro*, p. 173; Overweel, 'Keep Them Out!', pp. 22–4, notes 29,30; D.G.E. Hall, *A History of South-east Asia* (fourth ed.), Macmillan, 1981, p. 567.
- 23 Cameron, 'Traders', p. 95.
- 24 Ibid. p. 96.
- 25 It was publicized after the Anglo-Dutch treaty was officially signed on 6 April 1824: Cameron, 'Traders', p. 96.
- 26 Extract from the *Straits Journal*, July 1825, in MvK, ov 1825, 6 Dec no. 86. In it, it is noticeable that the name Australia is given as an alternative to New Holland.
- 27 Cameron, 'Traders', pp. 93,95–7. See also Overweel, 'Keep Them Out!', p. 37.
- 28 Extract from the *Straits Journal*, July 1825, in MvK, ov 1825, 6 Dec no. 86.
- 29 Even though the Dutch monopoly was accepted by the British in the 1824 Treaty of London: Overweel, 'Keep Them Out!', passim. This fear was justified, as the *Asiatic Journal* of February 1825 states that 'as far as we have been able to ascertain', the object [of Fort Dundas] 'is to open and preserve an intercourse between the Malay Coast, so as to encourage and facilitate the spice trade', extract in MvK, ov 1825, 6 December, no. 86.
- 30 Cameron, 'Traders', p. 93.
- 31 Jeroen Koch, *Koning Willem I: 1772–1843*, Boom, 2013, p. 370. Every year, government policies are still read by the king in 'de Troonrede' (literally 'Throne-speech').
- 32 Ibid, p. 317. This line was in article 73 of the constitution at the time. Broeze, however, reminds us that even an absolutist monarch cannot govern alone (although Willem tried to). His decisions were based on advice from many different corners of the state apparatus: F.J.A. Broeze, 'Laat Mercantilist of Selectief Vrijhandelaar? Koning Willem I en Zijn Economische Politiek Aangaande Nederlandse Handel met China', in Harm van Riel (ed.) *22 Opstellen Geschreven bij het Afscheid van*

- Mr. H. van Riel als Voorzitter van de Vereniging Het Nederlandsch Economisch-Historisch Archief*, M. Nijhoff, 1977, p. 221.
- 33 Koch, *Koning Willem I*, pp. 315,362.
- 34 Ibid. p. 475–6.
- 35 Ibid. p. 365.
- 36 Ibid, p. 57. Koch shows that Willem was brought up with this: everything was subject to usefulness. One of his teachers was influenced by enlightened ideas on government: Montesquieu, German *Kameralistik* and French *Science de la Police*.
- 37 Th. Stevens, *Van der Capellen's Koloniale Ambitie op Java. Economisch Beleid in een Stagnerende Conjunctuur 1816–1826*, Historisch Seminarium, 1982, pp. 8–19.
- 38 Ibid, p. 3.
- 39 Ibid, pp. 31,35. This was the opinion of Dirk van Hogendorp, who was one of the most important colonial policy makers at the start of the nineteenth century. Having seen the example of what the British had done in Bengal, he was a staunch supporter of direct tax on the free production of crops by indigenous farmers. It resulted in the introduction of the land rent system, never to leave Dutch colonial policy.
- 40 Stevens, *Van der Capellen's Koloniale Ambitie op Java*, p. 40. 'The Republic' being the Batavian Republic, succeeded by the United Kingdom of The Netherlands.
- 41 However, when for whatever reason the amount of money flowing to The Netherlands was regarded insufficient, liberal economic and welfare policies became the first victims. Note the similarity with increased protectionist measures when free trade was not working.
- 42 Stevens' book looks into the background of this: Van der Capellen was hardly to blame. The main reason was the price drop of colonial commodities.
- 43 Bart De Prins, *Voor Keizer en Koning. Leonard du Bus de Gisignies 1780–1849, Commissaris-Generaal van Nederlands-Indië*, Balans, 2002, p. 286.
- 44 Albert Schrauwens, 'The "Benevolent" Colonies of Johannes van den Bosch: Continuities in the Administration of Poverty in the Netherlands and Indonesia', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2001, p. 301.
- 45 Schrauwens, 'The "Benevolent" Colonies of Johannes van den Bosch', p. 305.
- 46 Glendinning, *Raffles and the Golden Opportunity*, p. 143; Philip Dröge, *De Schaduw van Tambora. De Grootste Natuurramp Sinds Mensenheugenis*, Spectrum, 2015.
- 47 The Colonies of Benevolence were innovative. In 2021, some of them became UNESCO World Heritage Sites.
- 48 Schrauwens, 'The "Benevolent" Colonies of Johannes van den Bosch', pp. 303,307. See also Koch, *Koning Willem I*, p. 367 and Angelie Sens, *De Kolonieman. Johannes van den Bosch (1780–1844), Volksverheffer in Naam van de Koning*, Balans, 2019, pp. 164–5. Benevolence [Dutch 'Weldadigheid', French 'Bienfaisance'] in a neutral sense means 'to do something useful or beneficent'. During the French period, the Bureau de Bienfaisance also functioned as the prison inspectorate. Sens, *De Kolonieman*, p. 174; De Prins,

- Voor Keizer en Koning*, p. 37.
- 49 Schrauwier, 'The "Benevolent" Colonies of Johannes van den Bosch', p. 310. Van den Bosch's ideas strongly resembled those of the utopian socialist Robert Owen.
- 50 Merchant king, canal king, citizen king (the Dutch version of Louis-Philippe I of France), decision king, enlightened despot etc. The king himself 'never knew well who he was': Koch, *Koning Willem I*, pp. 338–42.
- 51 Herman Franke, *Twee Eeuwen Gevangen. Misdaad en Straf in Nederland*, Aula, 1990, p. 38 and note 75 of chapter I. Based on the composition of farmer food in several countries, British-American scientist Count Rumford developed soups which he believed formed the best and cheapest diet.
- 52 Franke, *Twee Eeuwen Gevangen*, pp. 35–6.
- 53 *Ibid.*, pp. 37–40, 46–7, 63, 66.
- 54 MvK, ov 7 January 1821 no. 23
- 55 *Ibid.*
- 56 MvK, ov 25 May 1827 no. 106. Elout to the king. In this letter Elout argues this is not a suitable time to take up the matter, as the waiting is on a report from Du Bus. In view of his order two days later, the king must have been very dissatisfied with Elout's reply.
- 57 According to the king. In fact, a new penal code was presented to parliament in 1827 by his minister of justice. Franke, *Twee Eeuwen Gevangen*, p. 139.
- 58 NA J. van den Bosch Archives JvdBA, NA 2.21.028, Inv. No. 354, Letter Minister of Colonial Affairs to Van den Bosch, 19 February 1829.
- 59 Note that malaria literally means 'bad air'.
- 60 JvdBA Inv. No. 354, Considerations of the Minister of Colonial Affairs, 14 August 1827. The considerations are actually addressed to the king, but transferred unchanged to the colonies, to be used as instructions. In the considerations, the Minister cannot help expressing his uninvited opinion about colonization by convicts 'being in the interest of the motherland'.
- 61 *Ibid.*
- 62 *Ibid.*
- 63 From the British interregnum back to the Dutch.
- 64 The lives of Baumhauer family members are extensively described in: Mieke Breij and Jon Baumhauer, *De Stammen Onder de Leeuw. Bijdragen Tot de Geschiedenis van de Familie Bomhowere – Bomhower – Baumhewer – Boomhouwer – Boomhouer en (Von) Baumhauer*, M. Breij, 2001. On C.M. Baumhauer see pp. 249–52, 257–60, 265–70, 294–5, 301–2, 309, 313–14. See also A.J. van der Aa, *Biographisch Woordenboek der Nederlanden, Bevattende Levenbeschrijvingen van Zoodanige Personen, die Zich op Eenigerlei Wijze in ons Vaderland Hebben Vermaard Gemaakt* (Tweede deel), J.J. van Brederode, 1854, pp. 189–91. P.C. Molhuysen, and P.J. Blok (eds.), *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek* (Eerste deel), A.W. Sijthoff, 1911, pp. 251–2.
- 65 Advice by C.M. Baumhauer to the Lt. Governor-General about colonization by European criminals. The National Archives have at least two copies of the report: JvdBA Inv. No. 354 and MvK ov 19 February 1829 no. 60.
- 66 Baumhauer is referring to the seventeenth-century Caribbean buccaneers. The

- word is from Dutch *vrijbouter* (free booter), as are Spanish *filibustero* and English *filibuster*.
- 67 The Dutch used the general term *Alfoeren* for inhabitants of the interior in the Moluccas and New Guinea. They were considered being at a lower level of civilization than the coastal people. The term ‘Papuaans’ was used for the coastal dwellers of New Guinea.
- 68 Advice by C.M. Baumhauer to the Lt. Governor-General, MvK ov 19 February 1829 no. 60.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 As Du Bus was Commissioner-General and not Governor-General, a Lieutenant Governor-General was appointed, one of duties being to chair the Council of the Indies.
- 74 JvdBA inv. no. 354, Letter of 19 March 1828 by Lt. G-G Chassé to Comm.-Gen. Du Bus.
- 75 MvK ov 19 February 1829 no. 60, ov 28 April 1829 no. 79, ov 2 September 1829 no. 5.
- 76 MvK ov 19 February 1829 no. 60. The Dutch press reported it on 20 December 1828 (the *Opregte Haarlemsche Courant*). A month later, the official Dutch government newspaper (*Nederlandsche Staatscourant*) gave a somewhat sour comment. After reminding the reader of the failure of a similar colony in Sierra Leone, it wondered whether it would not be better if the British government paid more attention to poverty alleviation and crime prevention at home.
- 77 MvK ov 28 April 1829 no. 79.
- 78 MvK ov 2 September 1829 no. 55.
- 79 Elout to Van den Bosch, 12 November 1829, MvK ov 12 November 1829 no. 72.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 JvdBA inv. Nr. 354, Elout to Van den Bosch, 31 October 1828.
- 82 Ibid., reply by Van den Bosch, 4 November 1828.
- 83 J.L.T. de Vaynes van Brakell, *Zestien Zeereizen. Herinneringen Uit Een Veertigjarige Loopbaan bij de Nederlandse Marine*, P.N. Van Kampen, 1870, pp. 94–5.
- 84 MvK, ov 5 May 1830 no. 6.
- 85 A well-known phrase at the time, and untraceable.
- 86 *Geschiedkundige Nota Over het Instellen van Een Departement van Algemeen Bestuur Voor de Buitenbezittingen*, Landsdrukkerij, 1899, p. 2.
- 87 Ibid., p. 3.
- 88 NA Baumhauer family archive (access no. 2.21.205.04), inv. no. 57, introduction.
- 89 JvdBA inv. no. 216.
- 90 Baumhauer family archive, inv. no. 57, introduction. The Dutch newspaper *Handelsblad* suggested that his bad health was partly caused by the loss of his Director-General of Finances position. Three years after his death, in Amsterdam three hundred boxes of first-class cigars were auctioned from his estate: Breij and Baumhauer, *De Stammen Onder de Leeuw*, p. 269.

- 91 Koch, *Koning Willem I*.
- 92 Robert J. King, 'Review of *En el Panóptico del Mar del Sur: Orígenes y desarrollo de la visita australiana de la expedición Malaspina (1793)* by Juan Pimentel', *The Great Circle*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1993, p. 58.
- 93 Ibid.
- 94 Colin Forster, *France and Botany Bay: The Lure of a Penal Colony*, Melbourne University Press, 1996, p. 4.
- 95 F.J.A. Broeze, 'Whaling in the Southern Oceans. The Dutch Quest for Southern Whaling in the Nineteenth Century', in *Economisch- en Sociaal-Historisch Jaarboek*, vol. 40, 1977, p. 74.
- 96 In the 1840s, in parliament there was major disagreement about penal reform. However, all agreed about deportation of convicts to the colonies. Then the Colonial Office also refused. They did not want the Justice Minister to meddle in its affairs. Colonial administrators did not want the colonies to function as dump site. Franke, *Twee Eeuwen Gevangen*, pp. 186–7.
- 97 Glendinning calls it 'surreal time lags': 'Out East, one lived in the present, waiting for the past to catch up' (*Raffles and the Golden Opportunity*, p. 12).